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Charles King
Capt. U.S.A.

WARING'S PERIL.

Writings of Captain Charles King U.S.A.
v. 2

BY

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U. S. ARMY,
AUTHOR OF "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," "THE DESERTER," "DUNRAVEN RANCH," "AN ARMY PORTIA," "TWO SOLDIERS," "FROM THE RANKS," "A SOLDIER'S SECRET," ETC.

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WARING'S PERIL.

I.

"ANANĪAS!"

"Ye-as, suh?"

"What time is it?"

"Gyahd-mountin' done gone, suh."

"The devil it has! What do you mean, sir, by allowing me to sleep on in this shameless and unconscionable manner, when an indulgent government is suffering for my services? What sort of day is it, sir?"

"Beautiful day, Mr. Waring."

"Then go at once to Mr. Larkin and tell him he can't wear his new silk hat this morning,—I want it, and you fetch it. Don't allow him to ring in the old one on you. Tell him I mean the new 'spring style' he just brought from New York. Tell Mr. Ferry I want that new Hatfield suit of his, and you get Mr. Pierce's silk umbrella; then come back here and get my bath and my coffee. Stop there, Ananias! Give my pious regards to the commanding officer, sir, and tell him that there's no drill for 'X' Battery this morning, as I'm to breakfast at Moreau's at eleven o'clock and go to the *matinée* afterwards."

"Beg pahdon, suh, but de cunnle's done ohdered review fo' de whole command, suh, right at nine o'clock."

"So much the better. Then Captain Cram must stay, and won't need his swell team. Go right down to the stable and tell Jeffers I'll drive at nine-thirty."

"But——"

"No buts, you incorrigible rascal! I don't pay you a princely salary to raise obstacles. I don't pay you at all, sir, except at rare intervals and in moments of mental decrepitude. Go at once! Allez! Chassez! Skoot!"

"But, lieutenant," says Ananias, his black face shining, his even

white teeth all agleam, "Captain Cram stopped in on de way back from stables to say Glenco 'd sprained his foot and you was to ride de bay colt. *Please* get up, suh. Boots and Saddles 'll soun' in ten minutes."

"It won't, but if it does I'll brain the bugler. Tell him so. Tell Captain Cram he's entirely mistaken; I won't ride the bay colt—nor Glenco. I'm going driving, sir, with Captain Cram's own team and road-wagon. Tell *him* so. Going in forty-five minutes by my watch. Where is it, sir?"

"It ain't back from de jeweller's, suh, where you done lef' it day before yist'day; but his boy's hyuh now, suh, wid de bill for las' year. Whut shall I tell him?"

"Tell him to go to—quarantine. No! Tell him the fever has broken out here again, sir, and not to call until ten o'clock next spring, —next mainspring they put in that watch. Go and get Mr. Merton's watch. Tell him I'll be sure to overstay in town if he doesn't send it, and then I can't take him up and introduce him to those ladies from Louisville to-morrow. Impress that on him, sir, unless he's gone and left it on his bureau, in which case impress the watch,—the watch, sir, in any case. No! Stop again, Ananias; *not* in any case, only in the gold hunting-case; no other. Now then, vanish!"

"But, lieutenant, 'fo' Gawd, suh, dey'll put you in arrest if you cuts drill dis time. Cunnle Braxton says to Captain Cram only two days ago, suh, dat——"

But here a white arm shot out from a canopy of mosquito-netting, and first a boot-jack, then a slipper, then a heavy top-boot, came whizzing past the darky's dodging head, and, finding expostulation vain, that faithful servitor bolted out in search of some ally more potent, and found one, though not the one he sought or desired, just entering the adjoining room.

A big fellow, too,—too big, in fact, to be seen wearing, as was the fashion in the sixties, the shell jacket of the light artillery. He had a full round body, and a full round ruddy face, and a little round visorless cap cocked on one side of a round bullet head, not very full of brains, perhaps, yet reputed to be fairly stocked with what is termed "horse sense." His bulky legs were thrust deep in long boots, and ornamented, so far as the skin-tight breeches of sky-blue were concerned, with a scarlet welt along the seam, a welt that his comrades were wont to say would make a white mark on his nose, so red and bulbous was that organ. He came noisily in from the broad veranda overlooking the parade-ground, glanced about on the disarray of the bachelor sitting-room, then whirled on Ananias.

"Mr. Waring dressed?"

"No-o, suh; jus' woke up, suh; ain't out o' bed yit."

"The lazy vagabone! Just let me get at him a minute," said the big man, tramping over to the door-way as though bent on invading the chamber beyond. But Ananias had halted short at sight of the intruder, and stood there resolutely barring the way.

"Beg pahdon, lieutenant, but Mr. Waring ain't had his bath yit. Can I mix de lieutenant a cocktail, suh?"

"Can you? You black imp of Satan, why isn't it ready now, sir? Sure you could have seen I was as dhry as a lime-kiln from the time I came through the gate. Hware's the demijohn, you villain?"

"Bein' refilled, suh, down to de sto', but dar's a little on de sideboa'd, suh," answered Ananias, edging over thither now that he had lured the invader away from the guarded door-way. "Take it straight, suh, o' wid bitters—o' toddy?"

"Faith, I'll answer ye as Pat did the parson: I'll take it straight now, and then be drinking the toddy while your honor is mixin' the punch. Give me hold of it, you smudge! and tell your masther it's review,—full-dress,—and it's time for him to be up. Has he had his two cocktails yet?"

"The lieutenant doesn't care fo' any dis mawnin', suh. I'll fetch him his coffee in a minute. Did you see de cunnle's oade'ly, suh? He was lookin' fo' you a moment ago."

The big red man was gulping down a big drink of the fiery liquor at the instant. He set the glass back on the sideboard with unsteady hand and glared at Ananias suspiciously.

"Is it troot' you're tellin', nigger? Hwat did he say was wanted?"

"Didn't say, suh, but de cunnle's in his office. Yahnduh comes de oade'ly, too, suh; guess he must have hyuhd you was over hyuh."

The result of this announcement was not unexpected. The big man made a leap for the chamber door, only to find it slammed in his face from the other side.

"Hwat the devil's the matter with your master this morning, Ananias?—Waring! Waring, I say! Let me in: the K. O.'s orderly is afther me, and all on account of your bringing me in at that hour last night.—Tell him I've gone, Ananias.—Let me in, Waring, there's a good fellow."

"Go to blazes, Doyle!" is the unfeeling answer from the other side. "I'm bathing." And a vigorous splashing follows the announcement.

"For the Lord's sake, Waring, let me in. Sure I can't see the colonel now. If I could stand him off until review and inspection's over and he's had his dhrink, he'd let the whole thing drop; but that blackguard of a sinthry has given us away. Sure I told you he would."

"Then slide down the lightning-rod! Fly up the chimney! Evaporate! Dry up and blow away, but get *out!* You can't come in here."

"Oh, for mercy's sake, Waring! Sure 'twas you that got me into the scrape. You know that I was dhrunk when you found me up the levee. You made me come down when I didn't want to. Hwat did I say to the man last night, anyhow?"

"Say to him? Poor devil! why, you never can remember after you're drunk what you've been doing the night before. Some time it'll be the death of you. You abused him like a pickpocket,—the sergeant of the guard and everybody connected with it."

"Oh, murther, murther, murther!" groaned the poor Irishman, sitting down and covering his face with his hands. "Sure they'll

court-martial me this time without fail, and I know it. For God's sake, Waring, can't ye let a feller in and say that I'm not here?"

"Hyuh, dis way, lieutenant," whispered Ananias, mysteriously. "Slip out on de po'ch and into Mr. Pierce's room. I'll tell you when he's gone." And in a moment the huge bulk of the senior lieutenant of Light Battery "X" was being boosted through a window opening from the gallery into the bachelor den of the junior second lieutenant. No sooner was this done than the negro servant darted back, closed and bolted the long green Venetian blinds behind him, tiptoed to the bedroom door, and, softly tapping, called,—

"Mr. Waring! Mr. Waring! get dressed quick as you can, suh; I'll lay out your uniform in hyuh."

"I tell you, Ananias, I'm going to town, sir; not to any ridiculous review. Go and get what I ordered you. See that I'm properly dressed, sir, or I'll discharge you. Confound you, sir! there isn't a drop of Florida water in this bath, and none on my bureau. Go and rob Mr. Pierce,—or anybody."

But Ananias was already gone. Darting out on the gallery, he took a header through the window of the adjoining quarters through which Mr. Doyle had escaped, snatched a long flask from the dressing-table, and was back in the twinkling of an eye.

"What became of Mr. Doyle?" asked Waring, as he thrust a bare arm through a narrow aperture to receive the spoil. "Don't let him get drunk; *he's* got to go to review, sir. If he doesn't, Colonel Braxton may be so inconsiderate as to inquire why both the lieutenants of 'X' Battery are missing. Take good care of him till the review, sir, then let him go to grass; and don't you dare leave me without Florida water again, if you have to burglarize the whole post. What's Mr. Doyle doing, sir?"

"Peekin' froo de blin's in Mr. Pierce's room, suh; lookin' fo' de oade'ly. I done told him de cunnle was ahter him, but he ain't, suh," chuckled Ananias. "I fixed it all right wid de gyahd dis mawnin', suh. Dey won' tell 'bout his cuttin' up las' night. He'd forgot de whole t'ing, suh; he allays does; he never does know what's happened de night befo'. He wouldn't 'a' known about dis, but I told his boy Jim to tell him 'bout it ahter stables. I told Jim to sweah dat dey'd repohted it to de cunnle."

"Very well, Ananias; very well, sir; you're a credit to your name. Now go and carry out my orders. Don't forget Captain Cram's wagon. Tell Jeffers to be here with it on time." And the lieutenant returned to his bath without waiting for reply.

"Ye-as, suh," was the subordinate answer, as Ananias promptly turned, and, whistling cheerily, went banging out upon the gallery and clattering down the open stairway to the brick-paved court below. Here he as promptly turned, and, noiseless as a cat, shot up the stairway, tiptoed back into the sitting-room, kicked off his low-heeled slippers, and rapidly, but with hardly an audible sound, resumed the work on which he had been engaged,—the arrangement of his master's kit.

Already, faultlessly brushed, folded and hanging over the back of

a chair close by the chamber door were the bright blue, scarlet-welted battery trousers then in vogue, very snug at the knee, very springy over the foot. Underneath them, spread over the square back of the chair, a dark-blue, single-breasted frock-coat, hanging nearly to the floor, its shoulders decked with huge epaulettes, to the right one of which were attached the braid and loops of a heavy gilt aiguillette whose glistening pendants were hung temporarily on the upper button. On the seat of the chair was folded a broad soft sash of red silk net, its tassels carefully spread. Beside it lay a pair of long buff gauntlets, new and spotless. At the door, brilliantly polished, stood a pair of buttoned gaiter boots, the heels decorated with small glistening brass spurs. In the corner, close at hand, leaned a long curved sabre, its gold sword-knot, its triple-guarded hilt, its steel scabbard and plated bands and rings, as well as the swivels and buckle of the black sword-belt, showing the perfection of finish in manufacture and care in keeping. From a round leather box Ananias now extracted a new gold-wire *fourragère*, which he softly wiped with a silk handkerchief, dandled lovingly an instant the glistening tassels, coiled it carefully upon the sash, then producing from the same box a long scarlet horse-hair plume he first brushed it into shimmering freedom from the faintest knot or kink, then set it firmly through its socket into the front of a gold-braided shako whose black front was decked with the embroidered cross cannon of the regiment, surmounted by the arms of the United States. This he noiselessly placed upon the edge of the mantel, stepped back to complacently view his work, flicked off a possible speck of dust on the sleeve of the coat, touched with a chamois-skin the gold crescent of the nearest epaulette, then softly, noiselessly as before vanished through the door-way, tiptoed to the adjoining window, and peeked in. Mr. Doyle had thrown himself into Pierce's arm-chair, and was trying to read the morning paper.

"Wunner what Mars'er Pierce will say when he gits back from breakfast," was Ananias's comment, as he sped softly down the stairs, a broad grin on his black face, a grin that almost instantly gave place to preternatural solemnity and respect as, turning sharply on the side-walk at the foot of the stairs, he came face to face with the battery commander. Ananias would have passed with a low obeisance, but the captain halted him short.

"Where's Mr. Waring, sir?"

"Dressin' fo' inspection, captain."

"He is? I just heard in the mess-room that he didn't propose attending,—that he had an engagement to breakfast and was going in town."

"Ye-as, suh, ye-as, suh, General Roosseau, suh, expected de lieutenant in to breakfast, but de moment he hyuhd 'twas review he ohdered me to git everything ready, suh. I's goin' for de bay colt now. Beg pahdon, captain, de lieutenant says is de captain goin' to wear gauntlets or gloves dis mawnin'? He wants to do just as de captain does, suh."

What a merciful interposition of divine Providence it is that the African cannot blush! Captain Cram looked suspiciously at the earnest,

unwinking, black face before him. Some memory of old college days flitted through his mind at the moment. "O Kunopes!" ("thou dog-faced one!") he caught himself muttering, but negro diplomacy was too much for him, and the innocence in the face of Ananias would have baffled a man far more suspicious. Cram was a fellow who loved his battery and his profession as few men loved before. He was full of big ideas in one way and little oddities in another. Undoubted ability had been at the bottom of his selection over the head of many a senior to command one of the light batteries when the general dismounting took place in '66. Unusual attractions of person had won him a wife with a fortune only a little later. The fortune had warranted a short leave abroad this very year. (He would not have taken a day over sixty, for fear of losing his light battery.) He had been a stickler for gauntlets on all mounted duty when he went away, and he came home converted to white wash-leather gloves because the British horse-artillery wore no other, "and they, sir, are the nattiest in the world." He could not tolerate an officer whose soul was not aflame with enthusiasm for battery duty, and so was perpetually at war with Waring, who dared to have other aspirations. He delighted in a man who took pride in his dress and equipment, and so rejoiced in Waring, who, more than any subaltern ever attached to "X," was the very glass of soldier fashion and mould of soldier form. He had dropped in at the bachelor mess just in time to hear some gabbling youngster blurt out a bet that Sam Waring would cut review and keep his tryst in town, and he had known him many a time to overpersuade his superiors into excusing him from duty on pretext of social claims, and more than once into pardoning deliberate absence. But he and the post commander had deemed it high time to block all that nonsense in future, and had so informed him, and were nonplussed at Waring's cheery acceptance of the implied rebuke and most airy, graceful, and immediate change of the subject. The whole garrison was chuckling over it by night.

"Why, certainly, colonel," said he, "I *have* been most derelict of late during the visit of all these charming people from the North; and that reminds me, some of them are going to drive out here to hear the band this afternoon and take a bite at my quarters. I was just on my way to beg Mrs. Braxton and Mrs. Cram to receive for me, when your orderly came. And, colonel, I want your advice about the champagne. Of course I needn't say I hope you both will honor me with your presence." Old Brax loved champagne and salad better than anything his profession afforded, and was disarmed at once. As for Cram, what could he say when the post commander dropped the matter? With all his daring disregard of orders and established customs, with all his consummate *sang-froid* and what some called impudence and others "cheek," every superior under whom he had ever served had sooner or later become actually fond of Sam Waring,—even stern old Rounds,—"old Double Rounds" the boys called him, one of the martinets of the service, whose first experience with the fellow was as memorable as it was unexpected, and who wound up, after a vehement scoring of some two minutes' duration, during which

Waring had stood patiently at attention with an expression of the liveliest sympathy and interest on his handsome face, by asking impressively, "Now, sir, what have you to say for yourself?"

To which, with inimitable mixture of suavity and concern, Sam replied, "Nothing whatever, sir. I doubt if anything more could be said. I had no adequate idea of the extent of my misdoing. Have I your permission to sit down, sir, and think it over?"

Rounds actually didn't know what to think, and still less what to say. Had he believed for an instant that the young gentleman was insincere, he would have had him in close arrest in the twinkling of an eye; but Waring's tone and words and manner were those of contrition itself. It was not possible that one of the boys should dare to be guying him, the implacable Rounds, "old Grand Rounds" of the Sixth Corps, old Double Rounds of the horse-artillery of the Peninsula days. Mrs. Rounds had her suspicions when told of the affair, but was silent, for of all the officers stationed in and around the old Southern city Sam Waring was by long odds the most graceful and accomplished dancer and german leader, the best informed on all manner of interesting matters,—social, musical, dramatic, fashionable,—the prime mover in garrison hops and parties, the connecting link between the families of the general and staff officers in town and the linesmen at the surrounding posts, the man whose dictum as to a dinner or luncheon and whose judgment as to a woman's toilet were most quoted and least questioned, the man whose word could almost make or mar an army girl's success; and good old Lady Rounds had two such encumbrances the first winter of their sojourn in the South, and two army girls among so many are subjects of not a little thought and care. If Mr. Waring had not led the second german with Margaret Rounds the mother's heart would have been well-nigh crushed. It was fear of some such catastrophe that kept her silent on the score of Waring's reply to her irate lord, for if Sam did mean to be impertinent, as he unquestionably could be, the colonel she knew would be merciless in his discipline and social amenities would be at instant end. Waring had covered her with maternal triumph and Margaret with bliss unutterable by leading the ante-Lenten german with the elder daughter and making her brief stay a month of infinite joy. The Rounds were ordered on to Texas, and Margaret's brief romance was speedily and properly forgotten in the devotions of a more solid if less fascinating fellow. To do Waring justice, he had paid the girl no more marked attention than he showed to any one else. He would have led the next german with Genevieve had there been another to lead, just as he had led previous affairs with other dames and damsels. It was one of the ninety-nine articles of his social faith that a girl should have a good time her first season, just as it was another that a bride should have a lovely wedding, a belle at least one offer a month, a married woman as much attention at an army ball as could be lavished on a bud. He prided himself on the fact that no woman at the army parties given that winter had remained a wall-flower. Among such a host of officers as was there assembled during the years that followed on the heels of the war it was no difficult matter, to be sure, to find

partners for the thirty or forty ladies who honored those occasions with their presence. Of local belles there were none. It was far too soon after the bitter strife to hope for bliss so great as that. There were hardly any but army women to provide for, and even the bulkiest and least attractive of the lot was led out for the dance. Waring would go to any length to see them on the floor but that of being himself the partner. There the line was drawn irrevocably. The best dancer among the men, he simply would not dance except with the best dancers among the women. As to personal appearance and traits, it may be said first that Waring was a man of slender, graceful physique, with singularly well shaped hands and feet and a head and face that were almost too good-looking to be manly. Dark hazel eyes, dark brown hair, eyebrows, lashes, and a very heavy drooping moustache, a straight nose, a soft, sensitive mouth with even white teeth that were, however, rarely visible, a clear-cut chin, and with it all a soft, almost languid Southern intonation, musical, even ultra-refined, and he shrank like a woman from a coarse word or the utterance of an impure thought. He was a man whom many women admired, of whom some were afraid, whom many liked and trusted, for he could not be bribed to say a mean thing about one of their number, though he would sometimes be satirical to her very face. It was among the men that Sam Waring was hated or loved,—loved, laughed over, indulged, even spoiled, perhaps, to any and every extent, by the chosen few who were his chums and intimates,—and absolutely hated by a very considerable element that was prominent in the army in those queer old days,—the array of officers who, by reason of birth, antecedents, lack of education or of social opportunities, were wanting in those graces of manner and language to which Waring had been accustomed from earliest boyhood. His people were Southerners, yet, not being slave-owners, had stood firm for the Union, and were exiled from the old home as a natural consequence in a war in which the South held all against who were not for her. Appointed a cadet and sent to the Military Academy in recognition of the loyalty of his immediate relatives, he was not graduated until the war was practically over, and then, gazetted to an infantry regiment, he was stationed for a time among the scenes of his boyhood, ostracized by his former friends and unable to associate with most of the war-worn officers among whom his lot was cast. It was a year of misery, that ended in long and dangerous illness, his final shipment to Washington on sick-leave, and then a winter of keen delight, a social campaign in which he won fame, honors, friends at court, and a transfer to the artillery, and then, joining his new regiment, he plunged with eagerness into the gayeties of city life. The blues were left behind with the cold facings of his former corps, and hope, life, duty, were all blended in hues as roseate as his new straps were red. It wasn't a month before all the best fellows in the batteries swore by Sam Waring and all the others at him, so that where there were five who liked there were at least twenty who didn't, and these made up in quantity what they lacked in quality.

To sum up the situation, Lieutenant Doyle's expression was perhaps the most comprehensive, as giving the views of the great majority: "If

I were his K. O. and this crowd the coort, he'd 'a' been kicked out of the service months ago."

And yet, entertaining or expressing so hostile an opinion of the laughing lieutenant, Mr. Doyle did not hesitate to seek his society on many an occasion when he wasn't wanted, and to solace himself at Waring's sideboard at any hour of the day or night, for Waring kept what was known as "open house" to all comers, and the very men who wondered how he could afford it and who predicted his speedy swamping in a mire of debt and disgrace were the very ones who were most frequently to be found loafing about his gallery, smoking his tobacco and swigging his whiskey, a pretty sure sign that the occupant of the quarters, however, was absent. With none of their number had he ever had open quarrel. Remarks made at his expense and reported to him in moments of bibulous confidence he treated with gay disdain, often to the manifest disappointment of his informant. In his presence even the most reckless of their number were conscious of a certain restraint. Waring, as has been said, detested foul language, and had a very quiet but effective way of suppressing it, often without so much as uttering a word. These were the rough days of the army, the very roughest it ever knew, the days that intervened between the incessant strain and tension of the four years' battling and the slow gradual resumption of good order and military discipline. The rude speech and manners of the camp still permeated every garrison. The bulk of the commissioned force was made up of hard fighters, brave soldiers and loyal servants of the nation, to be sure, but as a class they had known no other life or language since the day of their muster-in. Of the line officers stationed in and around this Southern city in the lovely spring-tide of 186–, of a force aggregating twenty companies of infantry and cavalry, there were fifty captains and lieutenants appointed from the volunteers, the ranks, or civil life, to one graduated from West Point. The predominance was in favor of ex-sergeants, corporals, or company clerks,—good men and true when they wore the chevrons, but who, with a few marked and most admirable exceptions, proved to be utterly out of their element when promoted to a higher sphere. The entrance into their midst of Captain Cram with his swell light battery, with officers and men in scarlet plumes and full-dress uniforms, was a revelation to the sombre battalions whose officers had not yet even purchased their epaulettes and had seen no occasion to wear them. But when Cram and his lieutenants came swaggering about the garrison croquet-ground in natty shell jackets, Russian shoulder-knots, riding-breeches, boots, and spurs, there were not lacking those among the sturdy foot who looked upon the whole proceeding with great disfavor. Cram had two "rankers" with him when he came, but one had transferred out in favor of Waring, and now his battery was supplied with the full complement of subalterns,—Doyle, very much out of place, commanding the right section (as a platoon was called in those days), Waring commanding the left, Ferry serving as chief of caissons, and Pierce as battery adjutant and general utility man. Two of the officers were graduates of West Point and not yet three years out of the cadet uniform. Under these circum-

stances it was injudicious in Cram to sport in person the aiguillettes and thereby set an example to his subalterns which they were not slow to follow. With their gold hat-braids, cords, tassels, and epaulettes, with scarlet plumes and facings, he and his officers were already much more gorgeously bedecked than were their infantry friends. The post commander, old Rounds, had said nothing, because he had had his start in the light artillery and might have lived and died a captain had he not pushed for a volunteer regiment and fought his way up to a division command and a lieutenant-colonelcy of regulars at the close of the war, while his seniors who stuck to their own corps never rose beyond the possibilities of their arm of the service and probably never will. But Braxton, who succeeded as post commander, knew that in European armies and in the old Mexican War days the aiguillette was ordinarily the distinctive badge of general officers or those empowered to give orders in their name. It wasn't the proper thing for a linesman—battery, cavalry, or foot—to wear, said Brax, and he thought Cram was wrong in wearing it, even though some other battery officers did so. But Cram was just back from Britain.

"Why, sir, look at the Life Guards! Look at the Horse Guards in London! Every officer and man wears the aiguillette." And Braxton was a Briton by birth and breeding, and that ended it,—at least so nearly ended it that Cram's diplomatic invitation to come up and try some Veuve Clicquot, extra dry, upon the merits of which he desired the colonel's opinion, had settled it for good and all. Braxton's officers who ventured to suggest that he trim the plumage of these popinjays only got snubbed, therefore, for the time being, and ordered to get the infantry full dress forthwith, and Cram and his quartette continued to blaze forth in gilded panoply until long after Sam Waring led his last german within those echoing walls and his name lived only as a dim and mist-wreathed memory in the annals of old Jackson Barracks.

But on this exquisite April morning no fellow in all the garrison was more prominent, if not more popular. Despite the slight jealousy existing between the rival arms of the service, there were good fellows and gallant men among the infantry officers at the post, who were as cordially disposed towards the gay lieutenant as were the comrades of his own (colored) cloth. This is the more remarkable because he was never known to make the faintest effort to conciliate anybody and was utterly indifferent to public opinion. It would have been fortune far better than his deserts, but for the fact that by nature he was most generous, courteous, and considerate. The soldiers of the battery were devoted to him. The servants, black or white, would run at any time to do his capricious will. The garrison children adored him. There was simply no subject under discussion at the barracks in those days on which such utter variety of opinion existed as the real character of Lieutenant Sam Waring. As to his habits there was none whatever. He was a *bon vivant*, a "swell," a lover of all that was sweet and fair and good and gracious in life. Self-indulgent, said everybody; selfish, said some; lazy, said many, who watched him day-dreaming through the haze of cigar-smoke until a drive, a hop, a ride, or an opera-party

would call him into action. Slow, said the men, until they saw him catch Mrs. Winslow's runaway horse just at that ugly turn in the levee below the south tower. Cold-hearted, said many of the women, until Baby Brainard's fatal illness, when he watched by the little sufferer's side and brought her flowers and luscious fruit from town, and would sit at her mother's piano and play soft, sweet melodies and sing in low tremulous tone until the wearied eyelids closed and the sleep no potion could bring to that fever-racked brain would come at last for him to whom child-love was incense and music at once a passion and a prayer. Men who little knew and less liked him thought his enmity would be but light, and few men knew him so well as to realize that his friendship could be firm and true as steel.

And so the garrison was mixed in its mind as to Mr. Waring, and among those who heard it said at the mess that he meant at all hazards to keep his engagement to breakfast in town there were some who really wished he might cut the suddenly-ordered review and thereby bring down upon his shapely, nonchalant head the wrath of Colonel Braxton.

"Boots and Saddles" had sounded at the artillery barracks. Mr. Pierce, as battery officer of the day, had clattered off through the north gateway. The battery had marched with dancing plumes and clanking sabres out to the stables and gun-shed. The horses of Lieutenants Doyle and Ferry were waiting for their riders underneath the gallery of their quarters. Captain Cram, in much state, followed by his orderly bugler and guidon-bearer, all in full uniform, was riding slowly down the sunny side of the garrison, and at sight of him Doyle and Ferry, who were leisurely pulling on their gauntlets in front of their respective doors, hooked up their sabres and came clattering down their stairway; but no Waring had appeared. There, across the parade on the southern side, the bay colt, caparisoned in Waring's unimpeachable horse-equipments, was being led up and down in the shade of the quarters, Mr. Pierce's boy Jim officiating as groom, while his confrère Ananias, out of sight, was at the moment on his knees fastening the strap of his master's riding-trousers underneath the dainty gaiter boot, Mr. Waring the while surveying the proceeding over the rim of his coffee-cup.

"Dar, suh. Now into de coat, quick! Yahnduh goes Captain Cram."

"Ananias, how often have I told you that, howsoever necessary it might be for you to hurry, I never do? It's unbecoming an officer and a gentleman to hurry, sir."

"But you's got to inspect yo' section, suh, befo' you can repote to Captain Cram. Please hurry wid de sash, suh." And, holding the belt extended with both hands, Ananias stood eager to clasp it around Waring's slender waist, but the lieutenant waved him away.

"Get thee behind me, imp of Satan! Would you have me neglect one of the foremost articles of an artilleryman's faith? Never, sir! If there were a wrinkle in that sash it would cut a chasm in my reputation, sir." And, so saying, he stepped to the open door-way, threw the heavy tassel over and around the knob, kissed his hand jauntily

to his battery commander, now riding down the opposite side of the parade, backed deliberately away the full length of the sash across the room, then, humming a favorite snatch from "Faust," deliberately wound himself into the bright crimson web, and, making a broad flat loop near the farther end and without stopping his song, nodded coolly to Ananias to come on with the belt. In the same calm and deliberate fashion he finished his military toilet, set his shako well forward on his forehead, the chin-strap hanging just below the under lip, pulled on the buff gauntlets, surveyed himself critically and leisurely in the glass, and then began slowly to descend the stairs.

"Wait—jus' one moment, please, suh," implored Ananias, hastening after him. "Jus' happened to think of it, suh: Captain Cram's wearin' gloves dis mawnin'."

"Ah! So much the more chance to come back here in ten minutes. —Whoa, coltikins: how are you this morning, sir? Think you could run away if I begged you to pretty hard? You'll try, won't you, old boy?" said Waring, stroking the glossy neck of the impatient bay.—"Now, Jim, let go. Never allow anybody to hold a horse for you when you mount. That's highly unprofessional, sir. That'll do." And, so saying, he swung himself into saddle, and, checking the bounds of his excited colt, rode calmly away to join the battery.

Already the bandsmen were marching through the north gate on the way to the broad open field in which the manœuvres were held. The adjutant, sergeant-major, and markers were following. Just outside the gate the post commander was seated on horseback, and Cram had reined in to speak with him. Now, in his blithest, cheeriest tones, Waring accosted them, raising his hand in salute as he did so:

"Good-morning, colonel. Good-morning, Captain Cram. We're in luck to-day. Couldn't possibly have lovelier weather. I'm only sorry this came off so suddenly and I hadn't time to invite our friends out from town. They would have been so pleased to see the battalion, —the ceremonies."

"H'm! There was plenty of time if you'd returned to the post at retreat yesterday, sir," growled old Braxton. "Everybody was notified who was here then. What time *did* you get back, sir?"

"Upon my word, colonel, I don't know. I never thought to look or inquire; but it was long after taps. Pardon me, though, I see I'm late inspecting." And in a moment he was riding quietly around among his teams and guns, narrowly scrutinizing each toggle, trace, and strap before taking station midway between his lead drivers, and then, as Cram approached, reporting, "Left section ready, sir."

Meantime, the infantry companies were marching out through the gate and then ordering arms and resting until adjutant's call should sound. Drivers and cannoneers were dismounted to await the formation of the battalion line. Waring rode forward and in the most jovial off-hand way began telling Cram of the incidents of the previous day and his sight-seeing with the party of visitors from the North.

"By the way, I promised Mr. Allerton that they should see that team of yours before they left: so, if you've no objection, the first morning you're on duty and can't go up, I'll take advantage of your

invitation and drive Miss Allerton myself. Doesn't that court adjourn this week?"

"I'm afraid not," said Cram, grimly. "It looks as though we'd have to sit to-day and to-morrow both."

"Well, that's too bad! They all want to meet you again. Couldn't you come up this evening after stables? Hello! this won't do; our infantry friends will be criticising us: I see you're wearing gloves, and I'm in gauntlets. So is Doyle. We can't fit him out, I'm afraid, but I've just got some from New York exactly like yours. I'll trot back while we're waiting, if you don't object, and change them."

Cram didn't want to say yes, yet didn't like to say no. He hesitated, and—was lost. In another moment, as though never imagining refusal were possible, Waring had quickly ridden away through the gate and disappeared behind the high brick wall.

When the bugle sounded "mount," three minutes later, and the battery broke into column of pieces to march away to the manœuvring grounds, Mr. Ferry left the line of caissons and took command of the rear section. All that the battery saw of Waring or his mount the rest of the morning was just after reaching the line, when the fiery colt came tearing riderless around the field, joyously dodging every attempt of the spectators to catch him, and revelling in the delight of kicking up his heels and showing off in the presence and sight of his envious friends in harness. Plunge though they might, the horses could not join; dodge though they might, the bipeds could not catch him. Review, inspection, and the long ceremonials of the morning went off without the junior first lieutenant of Battery "X," who, for his part, went off without ceremony of any kind, Cram's stylish team and wagon with him. That afternoon he reappeared driving about the barrack square, a pretty girl at his side, both engrossed in the music of the band and apparently oblivious of the bottled-up wrath of either battery or post commander.

"Be gorra!" said Doyle, "I'd like to be in his place now, provided I didn't have to be in it to-morrow."

But when the morrow came there came no Waring with it.

II.

For twenty-four hours old Brax had been mad as a hornet. He was not much of a drill-master or tactician, but he thought he was, and it delighted him to put his battalion through the form of review, the commands for which he had memorized thoroughly and delivered with resonant voice and with all proper emphasis. What he did not fancy, and indeed could not do, was the drudge-work of teaching the minutiæ of the school of the battalion, explaining each movement before undertaking its execution. This was a matter he delegated to one of his senior captains. For a week, therefore, in preparation for a possible visit on the part of the new brigadier-general or his inspector, the six companies of the regiment stationed at the post had been fairly well schooled in the ceremonies of review and parade, and so long as noth-

ing more was required of them than a march past in quick time and a ten minutes' stand in line all might go well. The general had unexpectedly appeared one evening with only a single aide-de-camp, simply, as he explained, to return the calls of the officers of the garrison, six or eight of whom had known enough to present themselves and pay their respects in person when he arrived in town. Braxton swelled with gratified pride at the general's praise of the spick-span condition of the parade, the walks, roads, and visible quarters. But it was the very first old-time garrison the new chief had ever seen, a splendid fighting record with the volunteers during the war, and the advantage of taking sides for the Union from a doubtful State, having conspired to win him a star in the regular service only a year or two before.

"We would have had out the battery and given you a salute, sir," said Brax, "had we known you were coming; but it's after retreat now. Next time, general, if you'll ride down some day, I'll be proud to give you a review of the whole command. We have a great big field back here."

And the general had promised to come. This necessitated combined preparation, hence the order for full-dress rehearsal with battery and all, and then came confusion. Fresh from the command of his beautiful horse-battery and the dashing service with a cavalry division, Cram hated the idea of limping along, as he expressed it, behind a battalion of foot, and said so, and somebody told Brax he had said so, —more than one somebody, probably, for Brax had many an adviser to help keep him in trouble. The order that Cram should appear for instruction in review of infantry and artillery combined gave umbrage to the battery commander, and his reported remarks thereupon, renewed cause for displeasure to his garrison chief.

"So far as we're concerned," said Cram, who wanted to utilize the good weather for battery drill, "we need no instruction, as we have done the trick time and again before; and if we hadn't, who in the bloody Fifty-First is there to teach us? Certainly not old Brax."

All the same the order was obeyed, and Cram started out that loveliest of lovely spring mornings not entirely innocent of the conviction that he and his fellows were going to have some fun out of the thing before they got through with it. Not that he purposed putting any hitch or impediment in the way. He meant to do just exactly as he was bid; and so, when adjutant's call had sounded and the blue lines of the infantry were well out on the field, he followed in glittering column of pieces, his satin-coated horses dancing in sheer exuberance of spirits and his red-crested cannoneers sitting with folded arms, erect and statuesque, upon the ammunition-chests. Mrs. Cram, in her pretty basket phaeton, with Mrs. Lawrence, of the infantry, and several of the ladies of the garrison in ambulances or afoot, had taken station well to the front of the forming line. Then it became apparent that old Brax purposed to figure as the reviewing officer and had delegated Major Minor to command the troops. Now, Minor had been on mustering and disbursing duty most of the war, had never figured in a review with artillery before, and knew no more about battery tactics than Cram did of diplomacy. Mounted on a sedate old sorrel, bor-

rowed from the quartermaster for the occasion, with an antiquated, brass-bound Jenifer saddle, minus breast-strap and housings of any kind, but equipped with his better half's brown leather bridle, Minor knew perfectly well he was only a guy, and felt indignant at Brax for putting him in so false a plight. He took his station, however, in front of the regimental colors, without stopping to think where the centre of the line might be after the battery came, and there awaited further developments. Cram kept nobody waiting, however: his leading team was close at the nimble heels of Captain Lawrence's company as it marched gayly forth to the music of the band. He formed sections at the trot the instant the ground was clear, then wheeled into line, passed well to the rear of the prolongation of the infantry rank, and by a beautiful countermarch came up to the front and halted exactly at the instant that Lawrence, with the left flank company, reached his post, each caisson accurately in trace of its piece, each team and carriage exactly at its proper interval, and with his crimson silk guidon on the right flank and little Pierce signalling "up" or "back" from a point outside where he could verify the alignment of the gun-wheels on the rank of the infantry, Cram was able to command "front" before little Drake, the adjutant, should have piped out his shrill "Guides posts."

But Drake didn't pipe. There stood all the companies at support, each captain at the inner flank, and the guides with their inverted muskets still stolidly gazing along the line. It was time for him to pipe, but instead of so doing there he stuck at the extreme right, glaring down towards the now immovable battery and its serene commander, and the little adjutant's face was getting redder and puffier every minute.

"Go ahead! What are you waiting for?" hoarsely whispered the senior captain.

"Waiting for the battery to dress," was the stanch reply. Then aloud the shrill voice swept down the line: "Dress that battery to the right!"

Cram looked over a glittering shoulder to the right of the line, where stood the diminutive infantryman. The battery had still its war allowance of horses, three teams to each carriage, lead, swing, and wheel, and that brought its captain far out to the front of the sombre blue rank of foot,—so far out, in fact, that he was about on line with Major Minor, though facing in opposite direction. Perfectly confident that he was exactly where he should be, yet equally determined to abide by any order he might receive, even though he fully understood the cause of Drake's delay, Cram promptly rode over to the guidon and ordered "Right dress," at which every driver's head and eyes were promptly turned, but not an inch of a wheel, for the alignment simply could not be improved. Then after commanding "front" the captain as deliberately trotted back to his post without so much as a glance at the irate staff officer. It was just at this juncture that the bay colt came tearing down the field, his mane and tail streaming in the breeze, his reins and stirrups dangling. In the course of his gyrations about the battery and the sympathetic plunging of the teams some slight

disarrangement occurred. But when he presently decided on a rush for the stables, the captain re-established the alignment as coolly as before, and only noticed as he resumed his post that the basket phaeton and Mrs. Cram had gone. Alarmed, possibly, by the non-appearance of her warm friend Mr. Waring and the excited gambolings of his vagrant steed, she had promptly driven back to the main garrison to see if any accident had occurred, the colt meantime amusing himself in a game of fast-and-loose with the stable guard.

Then it was that old Brax came down and took a hand. Riding to where Minor still sat on his patient sorrel, the senior bluntly inquired,—

"What the devil's the matter?"

"I don't know," said Minor.

"Who does know?"

"Well, Drake, possibly, or else he doesn't know anything. He's been trying to get Cram to dress his battery back."

"Why, yes, confound it! he's a mile ahead of the line," said the colonel, and off he trotted to expostulate with the batteryman. "Captain Cram, isn't there room for your battery back of the line instead of in front of it?" inquired the chief, in tone both aggrieved and aggressive.

"Lots, sir," answered Cram, cheerfully. "Just countermarched there."

"Then I wish you'd oblige me by moving back at once, sir: you're delaying the whole ceremony here. I'm told Mr. Drake has twice ordered you to dress to the right."

"I've heard it, sir, only once, but have dressed twice, so it's all right," responded Cram, as affably as though he had no other aim in life than to gratify the whims of his post commander.

"Why, confound it, sir, it isn't all right by a da——good deal! Here you are 'way out on line with Major Minor, and your battery's——why, it isn't dressed on our rank at all, sir. Just look at it."

Cram resumed the carry with the sabre he had lowered in salute, calmly reversed so as to face his battery, and, with preternatural gravity of mien, looked along his front. There midway between his lead drivers sat Mr. Doyle, his face well-nigh as red as his plume, his bleary eyes nearly popping out of his skull in his effort to repress the emotions excited by this colloquy. There midway between the lead drivers in the left section sat Mr. Ferry, gazing straight to the front over the erected ears of his handsome bay and doing his very best to keep a solemn face, though the unshaded corners of his boyish mouth were twitching with mischief and merriment. There, silent, disciplined, and rigid, sat the sergeants, drivers, and cannoneers of famous old Light Battery "X," all agog with interest in the proceedings and all looking as though they never heard a word.

"I declare, sir," said Cram, with exasperating civility, "I can see nothing out of the way. Will you kindly indicate what is amiss?"

This was too much for Ferry. In his effort to restrain his merriment and gulp down a rising flood of laughter there was heard an explosion that sounded something like the sudden collapse of an inflated

paper bag, and old Brax, glaring angrily at the boy, now red in the face with mingled mirth and consternation, caught sudden idea from the sight. Was the battery laughing at—was the battery commander guying—him? Was it possible that they were profiting by his ignorance of their regulations? It put him on his guard and suggested a tentative.

"Do you mean that you are right in being so far ahead of our line instead of dressed upon it?" asked he of the big blond soldier in the glittering uniform. "Where do you find authority for it?"

"Oh, perfectly right, colonel. In fact, for six years past I've never seen it done any other way. You'll find the authority on page 562, Field Artillery Tactics of 1864."

For a moment Brax was dumb. He had long heard of Cram as an expert in his own branch of the service, but presently he burst forth:

"Well, in our tactics there's reason for every blessed thing we do, but I'll be dinged if I can see rhyme or reason in such a formation as that. Why, sir, your one company takes up more room than my six,—makes twice as much of a show. Of course if a combined review is to show off the artillery it's all very well. However, go ahead, if you think you're right, sir; go ahead! I'll inquire into this later."

"I know we're right, colonel; and as for the reason, you'll see it when you open ranks for review and we come to 'action front:' then our line will be exactly that of the infantry. Meantime, sir, it isn't for us to go ahead. We've gone as far as we can until your adjutant makes the next move."

But Braxton had ridden away disgusted before Cram wound up his remarks.

"Go on, Major Minor; just run this thing without reference to the battery. Damned if I understand their methods. Let Cram look after his own affairs; if he goes wrong, why—it's none of our concern."

And so Minor had nodded "Go ahead" to Mr. Drake, and presently the whole command made its bow, so to speak, to Minor as its immediate chief, and then he drew sword and his untried voice became faintly audible. The orders "Prepare for review" and "To the rear open order" were instantly followed by a stentorian "Action front" down at the left, the instant leap and rush of some thirty nimble cannoneers, shouts of "Drive on!" the cracking of whips, the thunder and rumble of wheels, the thud of plunging hoofs. Forty-eight mettlesome horses in teams of two abreast went dancing briskly away to the rear, at sight of which Minor dropped his jaw and the point of his sword and sat gazing blankly after them, over the bowed head of his placid sorrel, wondering what on earth it meant that they should all be running away at the very instant when he expected them to brace up for review. But before he could give utterance to his thoughts eight glossy teams in almost simultaneous sweep to the left about came sharply around again. The black muzzles of the guns were pointed to the front, every axle exactly in the prolongation of his front rank, every little group of red-topped, red-trimmed cannoneers standing

erect and square, the chiefs of section and of pieces sitting like statues on their handsome horses, the line of limbers accurately covering the guns, and, still farther back, Mr. Pierce could be heard shouting his orders for the alignment of the caissons. In the twinkling of an eye the rush and thunder were stilled, the battery without the twitch of a muscle stood ready for review, and old Brax, sitting gloomily in saddle at the reviewing point, watching the stirring sight with gloomy and cynical eye, was chafed still more to hear in a silvery voice from the group of ladies the unwelcome words, "Oh, wasn't that pretty!" He meant with all his heart to pull in some of the plumage of those confounded "woodpeckers," as he called them, before the day was over.

In grim silence, therefore, he rode along the front of the battalion, taking little comfort in the neatness of their quaint old-fashioned garb, the single-breasted, long-skirted frock-coats, the bulging black felt hats looped up on one side and decked with skimpy black feather, the glistening shoulder-scales and circular breastplates, the polish of their black leather belts, cartridge- and cap-boxes and bayonet-scabbards. It was all trim and soldierly, but he was bottling up his sense of annoyance for the benefit of Cram and his people. Yet what could he say? Neither he nor Minor had ever before been brought into such relations with the light artillery, and he simply didn't know where to hit. Lots of things looked queer, but after this initial experience he felt it best to say nothing until he could light on a point that no one could gainsay, and he found it in front of the left section.

"Where is Mr. Waring, sir?" he sternly asked.

"I wish I knew, colonel. His horse came back without him, as you doubtless saw, and, as he hasn't appeared, I'm afraid of accident."

"How did he come to leave his post, sir? I have no recollection of authorizing anything of the kind."

"Certainly not, colonel. He rode back to his quarters with my consent before adjutant's call had sounded, and he should have been with us again in abundant time."

"That young gentleman needs more discipline than he is apt to receive at this rate, Captain Cram, and I desire that you pay closer attention to his movements than you have done in the past.—Mr. Drake," he said to his adjutant, who was tripping around after his chief afoot, "call on Mr. Waring to explain his absence in writing and without delay.—This indifference to duty is something to which I am utterly unaccustomed," continued Braxton again, addressing Cram, who preserved a most uncompromising serenity of countenance; and with this parting shot the colonel turned gruffly away and soon retook his station at the reviewing point.

Then came the second hitch. Minor had had no experience whatever, as has been said, and he first tried to wheel into column of companies without closing ranks, whereupon every captain promptly cautioned "Stand fast," and thereby banished the last remnant of Minor's senses. Seeing that something was wrong, he tried again, this time prefacing with "Pass in review," and still the captains were implacable. The nearest one, in a stage whisper, tried to make the major hear "Close order, first." But all the time Brax was losing

more of his temper and Minor what was left of his head, and Brax came down like the wolf on the fold, gave the command to "Close order" himself, and was instantly echoed by Cram's powerful shout "Limber to the rear," followed by "Pieces left about! Caissons forward!" Then in the rumble and clank of the responding battery, Minor's next command was heard by only the right wing of the battalion, and the company wheels were ragged. So was the next part of the performance when he started to march in review, never waiting, of course, for the battery to wheel into column of sections. This omission, however, in no wise disconcerted Cram, who, following at rapid walk, soon gained on the rear of column, passing his post commander in beautiful order and with most accurate salute on the part of himself and officers, and, observing this, Minor took heart, and, recovering his senses to a certain extent, gave the command "Guide left" in abundant time to see that the new guides were accurately in trace, thereby insuring what he expected to find a beautiful wheel into line to the left, the commands for which movement he gave in louder and more confident tone, but was instantly nonplussed by seeing the battery wheel into line to the *right* and move off in exactly the opposite direction from what he had expected. This was altogether too much for his equanimity. Digging his spurs into the flanks of the astonished sorrel, he darted off after Cram, waving his sword, and shouting,—

"*Left* into line wheel, captain. *Left* into line wheel."

In vain Mr. Pierce undertook to explain matters. Minor presumed that the artilleryman had made an actual blunder and was only enabled to correct it by a countermarch, and so rode back to his position in front of the centre of the reforming line, convinced that at last he had caught the battery commander.

When Braxton, therefore, came down to make his criticisms and comments upon the conduct of the review, Minor was simply amazed to find that instead of being in error Cram had gone exactly right and as prescribed by his drill regulations in wheeling to the right and gaining ground to the rear before coming up on the line. He almost peevishly declared that he wished the colonel, if he proposed having a combined review, would assume command himself, as he didn't care to be bothered with combination tactics of which he had never had previous knowledge. Being of the same opinion, Braxton himself took hold, and the next performance, though somewhat erroneous in many respects, was a slight improvement on the first, though Braxton did not give time for the battery to complete one movement before he would rush it into another. When the officers assembled to compare notes during the rest after the second repetition, Minor growled that this was "a little better, yet not good," which led to some one suggesting in low tone that the major got his positives and comparatives worse mixed than his tactics, and inquiring further "whether it might not be well to dub him Minor Major." The laughter that followed this sally naturally reached the ears of the seniors, and so Brax never let up on the command until the review went off without an error of any appreciable weight, without, in fact, "a hitch in the fut or an unhitch in

the harse," as Doyle expressed it. It was high noon when the battalion got back to barracks and the officers hung out their moist clothing to dry in the sun. It was near one when the batterymen, officers and all, came steaming up from the stables, and there was the colonel's orderly with the colonel's compliments and desires to see Captain Cram before the big batteryman had time to change his dress.

Braxton's first performance on getting into cool habiliments was to go over to his office and hunt through the book-shelves for a volume in which he never before had felt the faintest interest,—the Light Artillery Tactics of 1864. There on his desk lay a stack of mail unopened, and Mr. Drake was already silently inditing the summary note to the culprit Waring. Brax wanted first to see with his own eyes the instructions for light artillery when reviewed with other troops, vaguely hoping that there might still be some point on which to catch his foeman on the hip. But if there were he did not find it. He was tactician enough to see that even if Cram had formed with his leading drivers on line with the infantry, as Braxton thought he should have done, neither of the two methods of forming into battery would then have got his guns where they belonged. Cram's interpretation of the text was backed by the custom of service, and there was no use criticising it further. And so, after discontentedly hunting through the dust-covered pages awhile in hopes of stumbling on some codicil or rebuttal, the colonel shut it with a disgusted snap and tossed the offending tome on the farthest table. At that moment Brax could have wished the board of officers who prepared the Light Artillery Tactics in the nethermost depths of the neighboring swamp. Then he turned on his silent staff officer,—a not unusual expedient.

"Why on earth, Mr. Drake, didn't you look up that point, instead of making such a break before the whole command?"

"I couldn't find anything about it in Casey, sir, anywhere," replied the perturbed young man. "I didn't know where else to look."

"Well, you might have asked Mr. Ferry or Mr. Pierce. The Lord knows you waste enough time with 'em."

"*You* might have asked Captain Cram," was what Drake wanted to say, but wisely did not. He bit the end of his penholder instead, and bridled his tongue and temper.

"The next time I have a review with a mounted battery, by George!" said the post commander, finally, bringing his fist down on the table with a crash, "I just—won't have it."

He had brought down the pile of letters as well as his fist, and Drake sprang to gather them, replacing them on the desk and dexterously slipping a paper-cutter under the flap of each envelope as he did so. At the very first note he opened, Brax threw himself back in his chair with a long whistle of mingled amazement and concern, then turned suddenly on his adjutant.

"What became of Mr. Waring? He wasn't hurt?"

"Not a bit, sir, that I know of. He drove to town with Captain Cram's team,—at least I was told so,—and left that note for you there, sir."

"He did!—left the post and left a note for me! Why!——" But here Braxton broke off short, tore open the note, and read:

"My dear Colonel,—I trust you will overlook the informality of my going to town without previously consulting you. I had purposed, of course, asking your permission, but the mishap that befell me in the runaway of my horse prevented my appearance at the review, and had I waited for your return from the field it would have compelled me to break my engagement with our friends the Allertons. Under the circumstances I felt sure of your complaisance.

"As I hope to drive Miss Allerton down after the *matinée*, might it not be a good idea to have dress-parade and the band out? They have seen the battery drills, but are much more desirous of seeing the infantry.

"Most sincerely yours,
"S. G. Waring."

"Well, for consummate impudence this beats the Jews!" exclaimed Brax. "Orderly, my compliments to Captain Cram, and say I wish to see him at once, if he's back from stables."

Now, as has been said, Cram had had no time to change to undress uniform, but Mrs. Cram had received the orderly's message, had informed that martial Mercury that the captain was not yet back from stables, and that she would tell him at once on his return. Well she knew that mischief was brewing, and her woman's wit was already enlisted in behalf of her friend. Hurriedly pencilling a note, she sent a messenger to her liege, still busy with his horses, to bid him come to her, if only for a moment, on his way to the office. And when he came, heated, tired, but bubbling over with eagerness to tell her of the fun they had been having with Brax, she met him with a cool tankard of "shandygaff" which he had learned to like in England among the horse-artillery fellows, and declared the very prince of drinks after active exercise in hot weather. He quaffed it eagerly, flung off his shako and kissed her gratefully, and burst all at once into laughing narration of the morning's work, but she checked him:

"Ned, dear, don't stop for that yet. I know you're too full of tact to let Colonel Braxton see it was any fun for you, and he's waiting at the office. Something tells me it's about Mr. Waring. Now put yourself in Mr. Waring's place. Of course he ought never to have made that engagement until he had consulted you, but he never dreamed that there would be a review to-day, and so he invited the Allertons to breakfast with him at Moreau's and go to the *matinée*."

"Why, that rascal Ananias said it was to breakfast at the general's," interrupted the battery commander.

"Well, perhaps he was invited there too. I believe I did hear something of that. But he had made this arrangement with the Allertons. Now, of course, if review were over at ten he could just about have time to dress and catch the eleven-o'clock car, but that would make it very late, and when Bay Billy broke away from Ananias nobody could catch him for over half an hour. Mr. Ferry had taken

the section, Mr. Waring wasn't needed, and—— Why, Ned, when I drove in, fearing to find him injured, and saw him standing there the picture of consternation and despair, and he told me about his engagement, I said myself, 'Why don't you go now?' I told him it was what you surely would say if you were here. Neither of us thought the colonel would object, so long as you approved, and he wrote such a nice note. Why, Ned, he only just had time to change his dress and drive up with Jeffers——"

"With Jeffers? With my—er—our team and wagon? Well, I like——"

"Of course you like it, you old darling. She's such a dear girl, though just a little bit gushing, you know. Why, I said, certainly the team should go. But, Ned, here's what I'm afraid of. Mrs. Braxton saw it drive in at nine-thirty, just after Billy ran away, and she asked Jeffers who was going, and he told her Mr. Waring, and she has told the colonel, I'll wager. Now, what you have got to do is to explain that to him, so that he won't blame Mr. Waring."

"The dickens I have! The most barefaced piece of impudence even Sam Waring was ever guilty of—to me, at least, though I've no doubt he's done worse a dozen times. Why, bless your heart, Nell, how can I explain? You might, but——"

"But would you have me suppose my big soldier couldn't handle that matter as well as I? No, sir! Go and do it, sir. And, mind you, I'm going to invite them all up here to the gallery to hear the band play and have a cup of tea and a nibble when they come down this evening. He's going to drive the Allertons here."

"Worse and more of it! Why, you conspiracy in petticoats, you'll be the ruin of me! Old Brax is boiling over now. If he dreams that Waring has been taking liberties with him he'll fetch him up so short——"

"Exactly! You mustn't let him. You must tell him I sent him up with your team—yours, mind you—to keep his engagement, since it was impossible for him to come back to review ground. Of course he wouldn't expect him to appear afoot."

"Don't know about that, Nell. I reckon that's the way he'll order out the whole gang of us next time. He's had his fill of mounted work to-day."

"Well, if he should, you be sure to acquiesce gracefully now. Whatsoever you do, don't let him put Mr. Waring in arrest while Gwen Allerton is here. It would spoil—everything."

"Oh, match-making, is it? Then I'll try." And so, vexed, but laughing, half indignant, yet wholly subordinate to the whim of his beloved better half, the captain hastened over, and found Colonel Braxton sitting with gloomy brow at his littered desk, his annoyance of the morning evidently forgotten in matters more serious.

"Oh—er—Cram, come in! come in, man," said he, distractedly. "Here's a matter I want to see you about. It's—well, just take that letter and read. Sit down, sit down. Read, and tell me what we ought to do about it."

And as Cram's blue eyes wandered over the written page they

began to dilate. He read from start to finish, and then dropped his head into his hand, his elbow on his knee, his face full of perplexity and concern.

"What do you think of it? Is there any truth——" and the colonel hesitated.

"As to their being seen together, perhaps. As to the other,—the challenge,—I don't believe it."

"Well, Cram, this is the second or third letter that has come to me in the same hand. Now, you must see to it that he returns and doesn't quit the post until this matter is arranged."

"I'll attend to it, sir," was the answer.

And so that evening. while Waring was slowly driving his friends about the shaded roads under the glistening white pillars of the rows of officers' quarters, chatting joyously with them and describing the objects so strange to their eyes, Mrs. Cram's "little foot-page" came to beg that they should alight a few minutes and take a cup of tea. They could not. The Allertons were engaged, and it was necessary to drive back at once to town, but they stopped for a moment to chat with their pretty hostess under the gallery, and then a moment later, as they rolled out of the resounding sally-port, an orderly ran up, saluted, and slipped a note in Waring's hand.

"It is immediate, sir," was his explanation.

"Ah! Miss Allerton, will you pardon me one moment?" said Waring, as he shifted whip and reins into the left hand and turned coolly up the levee road. Then with the right he forced open and held up the missive.

It only said, "Whatsoever you do, be here before taps to-night. Come direct to me, and I will explain. Your friend,

"CRAM."

"All right," said Waring, aloud. "My compliments to the captain, and say I'll be with him."

But even with this injunction he failed to appear. Midnight came without a word from Waring, and the morning dawned and found him absent still.

III.

It was one of Sam Waring's oddities that, like the hero of "Happy Thoughts," other people's belongings seemed to suit him so much better than his own. The most immaculately dressed man in the regiment, he was never satisfied with the result of the efforts of the New York artists whom he favored with his custom and his criticism. He would wear three or four times a new coat just received from that metropolis, and spend not a little time, when not on duty or in uniform, in studying critically its cut and fit in the various mirrors that hung about his bachelor den, gayly humming some operatic air as he conducted the survey, and generally winding up with a wholesale denunciation of the cutter and an order to Ananias to go over and get some other fellow's coat, that he might try the effect of that. These were liberties he took only with his chums and intimates, to be sure, but

they were liberties all the same, and it was delicious to hear the laugh with which he would tell how Pierce had to dress in uniform when he went up to the opera Thursday night, or how, after he had worn Ferry's stylish morning suit to make a round of calls in town and that young gentleman later on went up to see a pretty girl in whom he felt a growing interest, her hateful little sister had come in and commented on his "borrowing Mr. Waring's clothes." No man in the battery would ever think of refusing Sam the use of anything he possessed, and there were half a dozen young fellows in the infantry who were just as ready to pay tribute to his whims. Nor was it among the men alone that he found such indulgence. Mrs. Cram had not known him a fortnight when, with twinkling eyes and a betraying twitch about the corners of his mouth, he appeared one morning to say he had invited some friends down to luncheon at the officers' mess and the mess had no suitable china, therefore he would thank her to send over hers, also some table-cloths and napkins, and forks and spoons. When the Forty-Sixth Infantry were on their way to Texas and the officers' families were entertained over-night at the barracks and his rooms were to be occupied by the wife, sister, and daughters of Captain Craney, Waring sent the battery team and spring wagon to town with a note to Mrs. Converse, of the staff, telling her the ladies had said so much about the lovely way her spare rooms were furnished that he had decided to draw on her for wash-bowls, pitchers, mosquito-frames, nets and coverlets, blankets, pillows, slips, shams, and anything else she might think of. And Mrs. Converse loaded up the wagon accordingly. This was the more remarkable in her case because she was one of the women with whom he had never yet danced, which was tantamount to saying that in the opinion of this social bashaw Mrs. Converse was not considered a good partner, and, as the lady entertained very different views on that subject and was passionately fond of dancing, she had resented not a little the line thus drawn to her detriment. She not only loaned, however, all he asked for, but begged to be informed if there were not something more she could do to help entertain his visitors. Waring sent her some lovely flowers the next week, but failed to take her out even once at the staff german. Mrs. Cram was alternately aghast and delighted at what she perhaps justly called his incomparable impudence. They were coming out of church together one lovely morning during the winter. There was a crowd in the vestibule. Street dresses were then worn looped, yet there was a sudden sound of rip, rent, and tear, and a portly woman gathered up the trailing skirt of a costly silken gown and whirled with annihilation in her eyes upon the owner of the offending foot.

"That is far too elegant a skirt to be worn unlooped, madame," said Mrs. Cram's imperturbable escort, in his most suave and dulcet tones, lifting a glossy silk hat and bowing profoundly. And Mrs. Cram laughed all the way back to barracks at the recollection of the utter discomfiture in the woman's face.

These are mere specimen bricks from the fabric which Waring had builded in his few months of artillery service. The limits of the story are all too contracted to admit of extended detail. So, without

further expansion, it may be said that when he drove up to town on this eventful April day in Cram's wagon and Larkin's hat and Ferry's Hatfield clothes, with Pierce's precious London umbrella by his side and Merton's watch in his pocket, he was as stylish and presentable a fellow as ever issued from a battery barrack, and Jeffers, Cram's English groom, mutely approved the general appearance of his prime favorite among the officers at the post, at most of whom he opened his eyes in cockney amaze, and critically noted the skill with which Mr. Waring tooled the spirited bays along the levee road.

Nearly a mile above the barracks, midway between the long embankment to their left and the tall white picket fence surmounted by the olive-green foliage of magnolias and orange-trees on the other hand, they had come upon a series of deep mud-holes in the way, where the seapage-water from the rapidly-rising flood was turning the road-way into a pond. Stuck helplessly in the mud, an old-fashioned cabriolet was halted. Its driver was out and up to his knees thrashing vainly at his straining, staggering horse. The tortuous road-way was blocked; but Waring had been up and down the river-bank too many times both day and night to be daunted by a matter so trivial. He simply cautioned Jeffers to lean well over the inner wheel, guided his team obliquely up the slope of the levee, and drove quietly along its level top until abreast the scene of the wreck. One glance into the interior of the cab caused him suddenly to stop, to pass the reins back to Jeffers, to spring down the slope until he stood at the edge of the sea of mud. Here he raised his hat and cried,—

"Madame Lascelles! madame! this is indeed lucky—for me. Let me get you out."

At his call a slender, graceful woman who was gazing in anxiety and dismay from the opposite side of the cab, and pleading with the driver not to beat his horse, turned suddenly, and a pair of lovely dark eyes lighted up at sight of his face. Her pallor, too, gave instant place to a warm flush. A pretty child at her side clapped her little hands and screamed with delight,—

"*Maman! maman! C'est M'sieu'* Vayreeng; *c'est* Sa-am."

"Oh, Monsieur Wareeng! I'm so glad you've come! Do speak to that man! It is horrible the way he beat that poor horse.—*Mais non,* Nin Nin!" she cried, reproving the child, now stretching forth her little arms to her friend and striving to rise and leap to him.

"I'd like to know how in hell I'm to get this cab out of such a hole as this if I don't beat him," exclaimed the driver, roughly. Then once more, "Dash blank dash your infernal hide! I'll learn you to balk with me again!" Then down came more furious lashes on the quivering hide, and the poor tortured brute began to back, thereby placing the frail four-wheeler in imminent danger of being upset.

"Steady there! Hold your hand, sir! Don't strike that horse again. Just stand at his head a moment and keep quiet till I get these ladies out," called Waring, in tone quiet yet commanding.

"I'll get 'em out myself in my own way, if they'll only stop their infernal yellin'," was the coarse reply.

"Oh, Monsieur Wareeng," exclaimed the lady in undertone, "the

man has been drinking, I am sure. He has been so rude in his language."

Waring waited for no more words. Looking quickly about him, he saw a plank lying on the levee slope. This he seized, thrust one end across the muddy hole until it rested in the cab, stepped lightly across, took the child in his arms, bore her to the embankment and set her down, then sprang back for her young mother, who, trembling slightly, rose and took his outstretched hand just as another lash fell on the horse's back and another lurch followed. Waring caught at the cab-rail with one hand, threw the other arm about her slender waist, and, fairly lifting little Madame over the wheel, sprang with her to the shore, and in an instant more had carried her, speechless and somewhat agitated, to the top of the levee.

"Now," said he, "let me drive you and Nin Nin wherever you were going. Is it to market or church?"

"*Mais non*—to *bonne maman's*, of whom it is the *fête*," cried the eager little one, despite her mother's stern orders of silence. "Look!" she exclaimed, showing her dainty little legs and feet in creamy silken hose and kid.

It was "bonne maman," explained Madame, who had ordered the cab from town for them, never dreaming of the condition of the river road or suspecting that of the driver.

"So much the happier for me," laughed Waring.—"Take the front seat, Jeffers.—Now, Nin Nin, *ma fleurette*, up with you!" And the delighted child was lifted to her perch in the stylish trap she had so often admired. "Now, madame," he continued, extending his hand.

But Madame hung back, hesitant and blushing.

"Oh, Monsieur Wareeng, I cannot, I must not. Is it not that some one shall extricate the cab?"

"No one from this party, at least," laughed Waring, mischievously making the most of her idiomatic query. "Your driver is more *cochon* than *cocher*, and if he drowns in that mud 'twill only serve him right. Like your famous compatriot, he'll have a chance to say, 'I will drown, and no one shall help me,' for all I care. The brute! *Allons!* I will drive you to *bonne maman's* of whom it is the *fête*. Bless that baby daughter! And Madame d'Hervilly shall bless Nin Nin's *tout dévoué* Sam."

And Madame Lascelles found further remonstrance useless. She was lifted into the seat, by which time the driver, drunken and truculent, had waded after them.

"Who's to pay for this?" was his surly question.

"You, I fancy, as soon as your employer learns of your driving into that hole," was Waring's cool reply.

"Well, by God, I want five dollars for my fare and trouble, and I want it right off." And, whip in hand, the burly, mud-covered fellow came lurching up the bank. Across the boggy street beyond the white picket fence the green blinds of a chamber window in an old-fashioned Southern house were thrown open, and two feminine faces peered forth, interested spectators of the scene.

"Here, my man!" said Waring, in low tone, "you have earned no

five dollars, and you know it. Get your cab out, come to Madame d'Hervilly's, where you were called, and whatever is your due will be paid you; but no more of this swearing or threatening,—not another word of it."

"I want my money, I say, and I mean to have it. I'm not talking to you; I'm talking to the lady that hired me."

"But I have not the money. It is for my mother—Madame d'Hervilly—to pay. You will come there."

"I want it now, I say. I've got to hire teams to get my cab out. I got stalled here carrying you and your child, and I mean to have my pay right now, or I'll know the reason why. Your swell friend's got the money. It's none of my business how you pay him."

But that ended the colloquy. Waring's fist landed with resounding whack under the cabman's jaw, and sent him rolling down into the mud below. He was up, floundering and furious, in less than a minute, cursing horribly and groping in the pocket of his overcoat.

"It's a pistol, lieutenant. Look out!" cried Jeffers.

There was a flash, a sharp report, a stifled cry from the cab, a scream of terror from the child. But Waring had leaped lightly aside, and before the half-drunken brute could cock his weapon for a second shot he was felled like a log, and the pistol wrested from his hand and hurled across the levee. Another blow crashed full in his face as he strove to find his feet, and this time his muddled senses warned him it were best to lie still.

Two minutes more, when he lifted his battered head and strove to stanch the blood streaming from his nostrils, he saw the team driving briskly away up the crest of the levee; and, overcome by maudlin contemplation of his foeman's triumph and his own wretched plight, the cabman sat him down and wept aloud.

And to his succor presently there came ministering angels from across the muddy way, one with a brogue, the other in a bandanna, and between the two he was escorted across a dry path to the magnolia-fringed enclosure, comforted with soothing applications without and within, and encouraged to tell his tale of woe. That he should wind it up with vehement expression of his ability to thrash a thousand swells like the one who had abused him, and a piratical prophecy that he'd drink his heart's blood within the week, was due not so much to confidence in his own powers, perhaps, as to the strength of the whiskey with which he had been liberally supplied. Then the lady of the house addressed her Ethiop maid-of-all-work:

"Go you over to Anatole's now, 'Louette. Tell him if any of the byes are there I wahnt 'um. If Dawson is there, from the adjutant's office, I wahnt him quick. Tell him it's Mrs. Doyle, and never mind if he's been dhrinkin'; he shall have another dhrop here."

And at her beck there presently appeared three or four besotted-looking specimens in the coarse undress uniform of the day, poor devils, absent without leave from their post below and hoping only to be able to beg or steal whiskey enough to stupefy them before the patrol should come and drag them away to the guard-house. Promise of liberal reward in shape of liquor was sufficient to induce three of

their number to go out with the fuming cabman and help rescue his wretched brute and trap. The moment they were outside the gate she turned on the fourth, a pallid, sickly man, whose features were delicate, whose hands were white and slender, and whose whole appearance, despite glassy eyes and tremulous mouth and limbs, told the pathetic story of better days.

"You're off ag'in, are you? Sure I heerd so, and you're mad for a dhrink now. Can ye write, Dawson, or must I brace you up first?"

An imploring look, an unsteady gesture, alone answered.

"Here, thin, wait! It's absinthe ye need, my buck. Go you into that room now and wash yourself, and I'll bring it, and whin the others come back for their whiskey I'll tell 'um you've gone. You're to do what I say, now, and Doyle will see you t'rough; if not, it's back to that hell in the guard-house you'll go, my word on it."

"Oh, for God's sake, Mrs. Doyle——" began the poor wretch, imploringly, but the woman shut him off.

"In there wid you! the others are coming." And, unbarring the front door, she presently admitted the trio returning to claim the fruits of their honest labor.

"Is he gone? Did he tell you what happened?"

"He's gone, yes," answered one: "he's gone to get square with the lieutenant and his cockney dog-robber. He says they both jumped on him and kicked his face in when he was down and unarmed and helpless. Was he lyin'?"

"Oh, they bate him cruel. But did he tell you of the lady—who it was they took from him?"

"Why, sure, the wife of that old Frenchman, Lascelles, that lives below,—her the lieutenant's been sparkin' this three months."

"The very wan, mind ye!" replied the lady of the house, with significant emphasis and glance from her bleary eyes; "the very wan," she finished, with slow nodding accompaniment of the frowzy head. "And that's the kind of gintlemen that undertakes to hold up their heads over soldiers like Doyle. Here, boys, drink now, but be off ag'inst his coming. He'll be here any minute. Take this to comfort ye, but kape still about this till ye see me ag'in—or Doyle. Now run." And with scant ceremony the dreary party was hustled out through a paved court-yard to a gate-way opening on a side street. Houses were few and scattering so far below the heart of the city. The narrow strip of land between the great river and the swamp was cut up into walled enclosures, as a rule,—abandoned warehouses and cotton-presses, moss-grown one-storied frame structures, standing in the midst of desolate fields and decrepit fences. Only among the peaceful shades of the Ursuline convent and the warlike flanking towers at the barracks was there aught that spoke of anything but demoralization and decay. Back from the levee a block or two the double lines of strap-iron stretched over a wooden causeway between parallel wet ditches gave evidence of some kind of a railway, on which, at rare intervals, jogged a sleepy mule with a sleepier driver and a musty old rattle-trap of a car,—a car butting up against the animal's lazy hocks and rousing him occasionally to ringing and retaliatory kicks. Around the barracks the

buildings were closer, mainly in the way of saloons; then came a mile-long northward stretch of track, with wet fields on either side, fringed along the river by solid structures and walled enclosures that told of days more prosperous than those which so closely followed the war. It was to one of these graceless drinking-shops and into the hands of a rascally "dago" known as Anatole that Mrs. Doyle commended her trio of allies, and being rid of them she turned back to her prisoner, their erstwhile companion. Absinthe wrought its work on his meek and pliant spirit, and the shaking hand was nerved to do the woman's work. At her dictation, with such corrections as his better education suggested, two letters were draughted, and with these in her hand she went aloft. In fifteen minutes she returned, placed one of these letters in an envelope already addressed to Monsieur Armand Lascelles, No. — Rue Royale, the other she handed to Dawson. It was addressed in neat and delicate feminine hand to Colonel Braxton, Jackson Barracks.

"Now, Dawson, ye can't see her this day, and she don't want ye till you can come over here sober. Off wid ye now to barracks. They're all out at inspection yet, and will be for an hour. Lay this wid the colonel's mail on his desk, and thin go you to your own. Come to me this afthernoon for more dhrink if ye can tell me what he said and did when he read it. No! no more liquor now. That'll brace ye till dinner-time, and more would make ye dhrunk."

Miserably he plodded away down the levee, while she, his ruler, throwing on a huge, dirty white sun-bonnet, followed presently in his tracks, and shadowed him until she saw him safely reach the portals of the barracks after one or two fruitless scouts into wayside bars in hope of finding some one to treat or trust him to a drink. Then, retracing her steps a few blocks, she rang sharply at the lattice gate opening into a cool and shaded enclosure, beyond which could be seen the white-pillared veranda of a long, low, Southern homestead. A grinning negro boy answered the summons.

"It's you, is it, Alphonse? Is your mistress at home?"

"No; gone town,—*chez Madame d'Hervilly.*"

"Madame Devillease, is it? Very well; you skip to town wid that note and get it in your master's hands before the cathedral clock strikes twelve, or ye'll suffer. There's a car in t'ree minutes."

And then, well content with her morning's work, the consort of the senior first lieutenant of Light Battery "X" (a dame whose credentials were too clouded to admit of her reception or recognition within the limits of a regular garrison, where, indeed, to do him justice, Mr. Doyle never wished to see her, or, for that matter, anywhere else) betook herself to the magnolia-shaded cottage where she dwelt beyond the pale of military interference, and some hours later sent 'Louette to say to Doyle she wanted him, and Doyle obeyed. In his relief at finding the colonel had probably forgotten the peccadillo for which he expected punishment, in blissful possession of Mr. Waring's sitting-room and supplies now that Waring was absent, the big Irishman was preparing to spend the time in drinking his junior's health and whiskey and discoursing upon the enormity of his misconduct with all comers,

when Ananias entered and informed him there was a lady below who wished to see him,—"lady" being the euphemism of the lately enfranchised for the females of their race. It was 'Louette with the mandate from her mistress, a mandate he dared not disregard.

"Say I'll be along in a minute," was his reply, but he sighed and swore heavily, as he slowly reascended the stair. "Give me another dhrink, smut," he ordered Ananias, disregarding Ferry's suggestion, "Better drink no more till after dark." Then, swallowing his potion, he went lurching down the steps without another word. Ferry and Pierce stepped to the gallery and gazed silently after him as he veered around to the gate leading to the old war-hospital enclosure where the battery was quartered. Already his walk was perceptibly unsteady.

"Keeps his head pretty well, even after his legs are gone," said Ferry. "Knows too much to go by the sally-port. He's sneaking out through the back gate."

"Why, what does he go out there for, when he has the run of Waring's sideboard?"

"Oh, didn't you hear? She sent for him."

"That's it, is it? Sometimes I wonder which one of those two will kill the other."

"Oh, he wouldn't dare. That fellow is an abject coward in the dark. He believes in ghosts, spooks, banshees, and wraiths,—everything uncanny,—and she'd haunt him if he laid his hands on her. There's only one thing that he'd be more afraid of than Bridget Doyle living, and that would be Bridget Doyle dead."

"Why can't he get rid of her? What hold has she on him? This thing's an infernal scandal as it stands. She's only been here a month or so, and everybody in garrison knows all about her, and these doughboys don't make any bones about chaffing us on our lady friends."

"Well, everybody supposed he had got rid of her years ago. He shook her when he was made first sergeant, just before the war. Why, I've heard some of the old stagers say there wasn't a finer-looking soldier in all the regiment than Jim Doyle when he married that specimen at Brownsville. Doyle, too, supposed she was dead until after he got his commission, then she reappeared and laid claim to him. It would have been an easy enough matter five years ago to prove she had forfeited all rights, but now he can't. Then she's got some confounded hold on him, I don't know what, but it's killing the poor beggar. Good thing for the regiment, though: so let it go."

"Oh, I don't care a rap how soon we're rid of him or her,—the sooner the better; only I hate to hear these fellows laughing and sneering about Mrs. Doyle." And here the young fellow hesitated. "Ferry, you know I'm as fond of Sam Waring as any of you. I liked him better than any man in his class when we wore the gray. When they were yearlings we were plebes, and devilled and tormented by them most unmercifully day and night. I took to him then for his kindly, jolly ways. No one ever knew him to say or do a cross or brutal thing. I liked him more every year, and missed him when he was graduated. I rejoiced when he got his transfer to us. It's because

I like him so much that I hate to hear these fellows making their little flings now."

"What flings?" said Ferry.

"Well, you know as much as I do. You've heard as much, too, I haven't a doubt."

"Nobody's said anything about Sam Waring in my hearing that reflected on him in any way worth speaking of," said Ferry, yet not very stoutly.

"Not on him so much, perhaps, as the world looks at this sort of thing, but on her. She's young, pretty, married to a man years her senior, a snuffy, frowzy old Frenchman. She's alone with her child and one or two servants from early morning till late evening, and with that weazened little monkey of a man the rest of the time. The only society she sees is the one or two gossipy old women of both sexes who live along the levee here. The only enjoyment she has is when she can get to her mother's up in town, or run up to the opera when she can get Lascelles to take her. That old mummy cares nothing for music and less for the dance; she loves both, and so does Waring. *Monsieur le Mari* goes out into the foyer between the acts to smoke his cigarette and gossip with other relics like himself. Waring has never missed a night she happened to be there for the last six weeks. I admit he is there many a time when she is not, but after he's had a few words with the ladies in the general's box, what becomes of him? I don't know, because I'm seldom there, but Dryden and Taggart and Jack Merton of the infantry can tell you. He is sitting by her in the D'Hervilly *loge grillée* and going over the last act with her and rhapsodizing about Verdi, Bellini, Mozart, or Gounod, —Gounod especially and the garden-scene from 'Faust.'"

"Isn't her mother with her, and, being in mourning, doesn't she have to stay in her latticed loge instead of promenading in the foyer and drinking that two-headaches-for-a-picayune punch?" queried Ferry, eager for a diversion.

"Suppose she is," answered Pierce, stoutly. "I'm a crank,—strait-laced, if you like. It's the fault of my bringing up. But I know, and you know, that that little woman, in her loneliness and in her natural longing for some congenial spirit to commune with, is simply falling madly in love with Sam Waring, and there will be tragedy here before we can stop it."

"See here, Pierce," asked Ferry, "do you suppose Mrs. Cram would be so loyal a friend to Waring if she thought there was anything wrong in his attentions to Madame Lascelles? Do you suppose Cram himself wouldn't speak?"

"He has spoken."

"He has? To whom?"

"To me, three days ago; said I had known Waring longest and best, perhaps was his most intimate friend, and he thought I ought to warn him of what people were saying."

"What have you done?"

"Nothing yet: simply because I know Sam Waring so well that I know just what he'd do,—go and pull the nose of the man

who gossiped about him and her. Then we'd have a fight on our hands."

"Well, we can fight, I suppose, can't we?"

"Not without involving a woman's name."

"Oh, good Lord, Pierce, was there ever a row without a woman *au fond?*"

"That's a worm-eaten witticism, Ferry, and you're too decent a fellow, as a rule, to be cynical. I've got to speak to Waring, and I don't know how to do it. I want your advice."

"Well, my advice is *Punch's:* Don't. Hello! here's Dryden. Thought you were on court duty up at head-quarters to-day, old man. Come in and have a wet?" Mr. Ferry had seen some happy days at Fortress Monroe when the ships of Her Majesty's navy lay off the Hygeia and the gallants of England lay to at the bar, and Ferry rejoiced in the vernacular of the United Service, so far as he could learn it, as practised abroad.

"Thanks. Just had one over at Merton's. Hear you've been having review and all that sort of thing down here," said the infantryman, as he lolled back in an easy-chair and planted his boot-heels on the gallery rail. "Glad I got out of it. Court met and adjourned at ten, so I came home. How'd Waring get off?"

"Huh!—Cram's wagon," laughed Ferry, rather uncomfortably, however.

"Oh, Lord, yes, I know that. Didn't I see him driving Madame Lascelles up Rampart Street as I came down in the mule-car?"

And then Pierce and Ferry looked at each other, startled.

That evening, therefore, it was a comfort to both when Sam came tooling the stylish turnout through the sally-port and his battery chums caught sight of the Allertons. Pierce was just returning from stables, and Ferry was smoking a pipe of *perique* on the broad gallery, and both hastened to don their best jackets and doff their best caps to these interesting and interested callers. Cram himself had gone out for a ride and a think. He always declared his ideas were clearer after a gallop. The band played charmingly. The ladies came out and made a picturesque croquet-party on the green carpet of the parade. The officers clustered about and offered laughing wagers on the game. A dozen romping children were playing joyously around the tall flagstaff. The air was rich with the fragrance of the magnolia and Cape jasmine, and glad with music and soft and merry voices. Then the stirring bugles rang out their lively summons to the batterymen beyond the wall. The drums of the infantry rolled and rattled their echoing clamor. The guard sprang into rank, and their muskets, glistening in the slanting beams of the setting sun, clashed in simultaneous "present" to the red-sashed officer of the day, and that official raised his plumed hat to the lieutenant with the lovely girl by his side and the smiling elders on the back seat as the team once more made the circuit of the post on the back trip to town, and Miss Flora Allerton clasped her hands and looked enthusiastically up into her escort's face.

"Oh," she cried, "isn't it all just too lovely for anything! Why, I think your life here must be like a dream."

But Miss Allerton, as Mrs. Cram had said, sometimes gushed, and life at Jackson Barracks was no such dream as it appeared.

The sun went down red and angry far across the tawny flood of the rushing river. The night lights were set at the distant bend below. The stars came peeping through a shifting filmy veil. The big trees on the levee and about the flanking towers began to whisper and complain and creak, and the rising wind sent long wisps of straggly cloud racing across the sky. The moon rose pallid and wan, hung for a while over the dense black mass of moss-grown cypress in the eastward swamp, then hid her face behind a heavy bank of clouds, as though reluctant to look upon the wrath to come, for a storm was rising fast and furious to break upon and deluge old Jackson Barracks.

IV.

When Jeffers came driving into barracks on his return from town, his first care, as became the trained groom, was for his horses, and he was rubbing them down and bedding their stalls for the night when the sergeant of the battery guard, lantern in hand, appeared at the door. It was not yet tattoo, but by this time the darkness was intense, the heavens were hid, and the wind was moaning about the stables and gun-shed and whistling away over the dismal expanse of flat, wet, ditch-tangled fields towards the swamp. But the cockney's spirits were blithe as the clouds were black. As was usual when he or any other servitor was in attendance on Waring, the reward had been munificent. He had lunched at Cassidy's at the lieutenant's expense while that officer and his friends were similarly occupied at the more exclusive Moreau's. He had stabled the team at the quartermaster's while he had personally attended the *matinée* at the St. Charles, which was more to his taste than Booth and high tragedy. He had sauntered about the Tattersalls and smoked Waring's cigars and patronized the jockeys gathered there for the spring meeting on the Metairie, but promptly on time was awaiting the return of the party from their drive and lolling about the ladies' entrance to the St. Charles Hotel, when he became aware, as the lamps were being lighted and the dusk of the evening gave place to lively illumination, that two men had passed and repassed the open portals several times, and that they were eying him curiously, and chattering to each other in French. One of them he presently recognized as the little "frog-eater" who occupied the old house on the levee, Lascelles, the husband of the pretty Frenchwoman he and the lieutenant had dragged out of the mud that very morning and had driven up to the old D'Hervilly place on Rampart Street. Even as he was wondering how cabby got out of his scrape and chuckling with satisfaction over the scientific manner in which Mr. Waring had floored that worthy, Mr. Jeffers was surprised to find himself most civilly accosted by old Lascelles, who had been informed, he said, by Madame his wife, of the heroic services rendered her that morning by Monsieur Jeffers and Monsieur le Capitaine. He begged of the former the acceptance of the small *douceur* which he slipped

into the Englishman's accustomed palm, and inquired when he might hope to see the brave captain and disembarrass himself of his burden of gratitude.

"Here they come now," said Jeffers, promptly pocketing the money and springing forward to knuckle his hat-brim and stand at the horses' heads. All grace and animation, Mr. Waring had assisted his friends to alight, had promised to join them in the ladies' parlor in ten minutes, had sprung to the seat again, signalling Jeffers to tumble up behind, and then had driven rapidly away through Carondelet Street to the broad avenue beyond. Here he tossed the reins to Jeffers, disappeared a moment, and came back with a little Indian-made basket filled to overflowing with exquisite double violets rich with fragrance.

"Give this to Mrs. Cram for me, and tell the captain I'll drop in to thank him in a couple of hours, and—— Here, Jeffers," he said, and Jeffers had pocketed another greenback, and had driven briskly homeward, well content with the result of his day's labors, and without having mentioned to Mr. Waring the fact that Lascelles had been at the hotel making inquiries for him. A day so profitable and so pleasant Jeffers had not enjoyed since his arrival at the barracks, and he was humming away in high good humor, all reckless of the rising storm, when the gruff voice of Sergeant Schwartz disturbed him:

"Chevvers, you will rebort at vonst to Captain Cram."

"Who says I will?" said Jeffers, cheerfully, though bent on mischief, but was awed into instant silence at seeing that veteran step quickly back, stand attention, and raise his hand in salute, for there came Cram himself, Pierce with him.

"Did Mr. Waring come back with you?" was the first question.

"No, sir; Hi left Mr. Warink on Canal Street. 'E said 'e'd be back to thank the capt'in in a little while, sir, and 'e sent these for the capt'in's lady."

Cram took the beautiful basket of violets with dubious hand, though his eyes kindled when he noted their profusion and fragrance. Nell loved violets, and it was like Waring to remember so bountifully her fondness for them.

"What detained him? Did he send no word?"

"'E said nothink, and sent nothink but the basket, sir. 'E said a couple of hours, now I think of it, sir. 'E was going back to the 'otel to dine with a lady and gent."

For a moment Cram was silent. He glanced at Pierce, as much as to say, Have you no question to ask? but the youngster held his peace. The senior officer hated to inquire of his servant into the details of the day's doings. He was more than half indignant at Waring for having taken such advantage of even an implied permission as to drive off with his equipage and groom in so summary a way. Of course Nell had said, Take it and go, but Nell could have had no idea of the use to which the wagon was to be put. If Waring left the garrison with the intention of using the equipage to take Madame Lascelles driving, it was the most underhand and abominable thing he had ever heard of his doing. It was unlike him. It couldn't be true. Yet had not Braxton shown him the letter which said he was

seen on the levee with her by his side? Had not Dryden further informed every man and woman and child with whom he held converse during the day that he had seen Waring with Cram's team driving Madame Lascelles up Rampart Street, and was not there a story already afloat that old Lascelles had forbidden him ever to darken his threshold again,—forbidden Madame to drive, dance, or even speak with him? And was there not already in the post commander's hand a note intimating that Monsieur Lascelles would certainly challenge Waring to instant and mortal combat if Waring had used the wagon as alleged? Jeffers must know about it and could and should tell if required, but Cram simply could not and would not ask the groom to detail the movements of the gentleman. Had not Waring sent word he would be home in two hours and would come to see his battery commander at once? Did not that mean he would explain fully? Cram gulped down the query that rose to his lips.

"All right, then, Pierce; we'll take these over to Mrs. Cram and have a bite ready for Waring on his return," said the stout-hearted fellow, and, in refusing to question his servant, missed the chance of averting catastrophe.

And so they bore the beautiful cluster of violets, with its mute pledge of fidelity and full explanation, to his rejoicing Nell, and the trio sat and chatted, and one or two visitors came in for a while and then scurried home as the rain began to plash on the windows, and the bugles and drums and fifes sounded far away at tattoo and more than usually weird and mournful at taps, and finally ten-thirty came, by which time it had been raining torrents, and the wind was lashing the roaring river into foam, and the trees were bowing low before their master, and the levee road was a quagmire, and Cram felt convinced no cab could bring his subaltern home. Yet in his nervousness and anxiety he pulled on his boots, threw his gum coat over his uniform, tiptoed in to bend over Nell's sleeping form and whisper, should she wake, that he was going only to the sally-port or perhaps over to Waring's quarters, but she slept peacefully and never stirred, so noiselessly he slipped out on the gallery and down the stairs and stalked boldly out into the raging storm, guided by the dim light burning in Waring's room. Ananias was sleeping curled up on a rug in front of the open fireplace, and Cram stirred him up with his foot. The negro rolled lazily over, with a stretch and yawn.

"Did Mr. Waring take any arms with him?" queried the captain.

"Any whut, suh?" responded Ananias, rubbing his eyes and still only half awake.

"Any pistol or knife?"

"Lord, suh, no. Mr. Waring don't never carry anything o' dat sort."

A student-lamp was burning low on the centre-table. There lay among the books and papers a couple of letters, evidently received that day and still unopened. There lay Waring's cigar-case, a pretty trifle given him by some far-away friend, with three or four fragrant Havanas temptingly visible. There lay a late magazine, its pages still uncut. Cram looked at the dainty wall clock, ticking merrily away over the mantel. Eleven-thirty-five! Well, he was too anxious to

sleep anyhow, why not wait a few minutes? Waring might come, probably would come. If no cab could make its way down by the levee road, there were the late cars from town; they had to make the effort anyhow. Cram stepped to the sideboard, mixed a mild toddy, sipped it reflectively, then lighted a cigar and threw himself into the easy-chair. Ananias, meantime, was up and astir. Seeing that Cram was looking about in search of a paper-cutter, the boy stepped forward and bent over the table.

"De lieutenant always uses dis, suh," said he, lifting first one paper, then another, searching under each. "Don't seem to be yer now, suh. You've seen it, dough, captain,—dat cross-handled dagger wid de straight blade."

"Yes, I know. Where is it?" asked Cram. "That'll do."

"Tain't yer, suh, now. Can't find it yer, nohow."

"Well, then, Mr. Waring probably took a knife, after all."

"No, suh, I don't t'ink so. I never knowed him to use it befo' away from de room."

"Anybody else been here?" said Cram.

"Oh, dey was all in yer, suh, dis arternoon, but Mr. Doyle he was sent for, suh, and had to go."

A step and the rattle of a sword were heard on the gallery without. The door opened, and in came Merton of the infantry, officer of the day.

"Hello, Waring!" he began. "Oh, it's you, is it, captain? Isn't Waring back? I saw the light, and came up to chin with him a moment. Beastly night, isn't it?"

"Waring isn't back yet. I look for him by the eleven-thirty car," answered the captain.

"Why, that's in. No Waring there, but half a dozen poor devils, half drowned and half drunk, more'n half drunk, one of your men among 'em. We had to put him into the guard-house to keep him from murdering Dawson, the head-quarters clerk. There's been some kind of a row."

"Sorry to hear that. Who is the man?"

"Kane. He said Dawson was lying about his officer and he wouldn't stand it."

"Kane!" exclaimed Cram, rising. "Why, he's one of our best. I never heard of his being riotous before."

"He's riotous enough to-night. He wanted to lick all six of our fellows, and if I hadn't got there when I did they would probably have kicked him into a pulp. All were drunk; Kane, too, I should say; and as for Dawson, he was just limp."

"Would you mind going down and letting me talk with Kane a moment? I never knew him to be troublesome before, though he sometimes drank a little. He was on pass this evening."

"Well, it's raining cats and dogs, captain, but come along. If you can stand it I can."

A few minutes later the sergeant of the guard threw open one of the wooden compartments in the guard-house, and there sat Kane, his face buried in his hands.

"I ordered him locked in here by himself, because I feared our fellows would hammer him if he were turned in with them," explained Mr. Merton, and at sound of the voice the prisoner looked up and saw his commander, dripping with wet. Unsteadily he rose to his feet.

"Captain," he began, thickly, "I'd never have done it in the world, sir, but that blackguard was drunk, sir, and slandering my officer, and I gave him fair warning to quit or I'd hit him, but he kept on."

"Ye-es? And what did he say?"

"He said—I wouldn't believe it, sir—that Mr. Doyle was that drunk that him and some other fellers had lifted him out of the mud and put him to bed up there at—up there at the house, sir, back of Anatole's place. I think the captain knows."

"Ah, you should have steered clear of such company, Kane. Did this happen at Anatole's saloon?"

"Yes, sir, and them fellers was making so much noise that the dago turned them all out and shut up the shop at eleven o'clock, and that's what made them follow me home in the car and abuse me all the way. I couldn't stand it, sir."

"You would only have laughed at them if your better judgment hadn't been ruined by liquor. Sorry for you, Kane, but you've been drinking just enough to be a nuisance, and must stay where you are for the night. They'll be sorry for what they said in the morning. —Did you lock up the others, Mr. Merton?" he asked, as they turned away.

"All but Dawson, sir. I took him over to the hospital and put a sentry over him. That fellow looks to be verging on jimjams, and I wouldn't be surprised if he'd been talking as Kane says." Merton might have added, "and it's probably true," but courtesy to his battery friend forbade. Cram did add mentally something to the same effect, but loyalty to his arm of the service kept him silent. At the flag-staff the two officers stopped.

"Merton, oblige me by saying nothing as to the alleged language about Doyle, will you?"

"Certainly, captain. Good-night."

Then, as the officer of the day's lantern flickered away in one direction, Cram turned in the other, and presently went climbing up the stairs to the gallery leading to the quarters of his senior first lieutenant. A dim light was shining through the shutters. Cram knocked at the door; no answer. Opening it, he glanced in. The room was unoccupied. A cheap marine clock, ticking between the north windows over the wash-stand, indicated midnight, and the battery commander turned away in vexation of spirit. Lieutenant Doyle had no authority to be absent from the post.

It was still dark and storming furiously when the bugles of the battery sounded the reveille, and by the light of the swinging lanterns the men marched away in their canvas stable rig, looking like a column of ghosts. Yet, despite the gale and the torrents of rain, Pierce was in no wise surprised to find Cram at his elbow when the horses were led out to water.

"Groom in-doors this morning, Mr. Pierce. Is Waring home?"

"No, sir; Ananias told me when he brought me up my coffee."

"Hold the morning report, then, until I come to the office. I fear we have both first lieutenants to report absent to-day. You and I may have to go to town: so get your breakfast early. We will ride. I doubt if even an ambulance could get through. Tell me, Pierce, have you spoken to Waring about—about that matter we were discussing? Has he ever given you any idea that he had received warning of any kind from old Lascelles—or any of his friends?"

"No, sir. I've had no chance to speak, to be sure, and, so far as I could observe, he and Mr. Lascelles seemed on very excellent terms only a few days ago."

"Well, I wish I had spoken myself," said Cram, and turned away.

That morning, with two first lieutenants absent without leave, the report of Light Battery "X" went into the adjutant's office just as its commander and his junior subaltern went out and silently mounted the dripping horses standing in front. The two orderlies, with their heads poked through the slit of their ponchos, briskly seated themselves in saddle, and then the colonel hurried forth just in time to hail,—

"Oh, Cram! one minute." And Cram reined about and rode to the side of the post commander, who stood under the shelter of the broad gallery.

"I wouldn't say anything about this to any one at head-quarters except Reynolds. There's no one else on the staff to whom Waring would apply, is there?"

"No one, sir. Reynolds is the only man I can think of."

"Will you send an orderly back with word as soon as you know?"

"Yes, sir, the moment I hear. And-d—shall I send you word from—there,"—and Cram nodded northward, and then, in a lower tone,—"as to Doyle?"

"Oh, damn Doyle! I don't care if he never——" But here the commander of the post regained control of himself, and with partiug wave of the hand turned back to his office.

Riding in single file up the levee, for the city road was one long pool, with the swollen river on their left, and the slanting torrents of rain obscuring all objects on the other hand, the party made its way for several squares without exchanging a word. Presently the leading file came opposite the high wall of the Lascelles place. The green latticed gate stood open,—an unusual thing,—and both officers bent low over their pommels and gazed along the dark, rain-swept alley to the pillared portico dimly seen beyond. Not a soul was in sight. The water was already on a level with the banquette, and would soon be running across and into the gate. A vagabond dog skulking about the place gave vent to a mournful howl. A sudden thought struck the captain. He led the way down the slope and forded across to the north side, the others following.

"Joyce," said he to his orderly, "dismount and go in there and ring at the door. Ask if Mr. Lascelles is home. If not, ask if Madame has any message she would like to send to town, or if we can be of any service."

The soldier was gone but a moment, and came hurrying back, a

negro boy, holding a long fold of matting over his head to shed the rain, chasing at his heels. It was Alphonse.

"M'sieu' not yet of return," said he, in labored translation of his negro French, "and Madame remain chez Madame d'Hervilly. I am alone wiz my mudder, and she has fear."

"Oh, it's all right, I fancy," said Cram, reassuringly. "They were caught by the storm, and wisely stayed up-town. I saw your gate open, so we stopped to inquire. We'll ride over to Madame d'Hervilly's and ask for them. How came your gate open?"

"*Mo connais pas;* I dunno, sare. It was lock' last night."

"Why, that's odd," said Cram. "Better bolt it now, or all the cattle along the levee will be in there. You can't lock out the water, though. Who had the key besides Mr. Lascelles or Madame?"

"Nobody, sare; but there is muddy foots all over the piazza."

"The devil! I'll have to look in for a moment." A nod to Pierce brought him too from the saddle, and the officers handed their reins to the orderlies. Then together they entered the gate and strode up the white shell walk, looking curiously about them through the dripping shrubbery. Again that dismal howl was raised, and Pierce, stopping with impatient exclamation, tore half a brick from the yielding border of the walk and sent it hurtling through the trees. With his tail between his legs, the brute darted from behind a sheltering bush, scurried away around the corner of the house, glancing fearfully back, then, halting at safe distance, squatted on his haunches and lifted up his mournful voice again.

"Whose dog is that?" demanded Cram.

"M'sieu' Philippe's: he not now here. He is de brudder to Monsieur."

At the steps the captain bent and closely examined them and the floor of the low veranda to which they led. Both were disfigured with muddy footprints. Pierce would have gone still further in the investigation, but his senior held up a warning hand.

"Two men have been here," he muttered. "They have tried the door and tried the blinds.—Where did you sleep last night, boy?" and with the words he turned suddenly on the negro. "Did you hear no sound?"

"No, sare. I sleep in my bed,—'way back. No, I hear noting,—noting." And now the negro's face was twitching, his eyes staring. Something in the soldier's stern voice told him that there was tragedy in the air.

"If this door is locked, go round and open it from within," said Cram, briefly. Then, as Alphonse disappeared around the north side, he stepped back to the shell walk and followed one of its branches around the other. An instant later Pierce heard him call. Hastening in his wake, the youngster came upon his captain standing under a window, one of whose blinds was hanging partly open, water standing in pools all around him.

"Look here," was all he said, and pointed upward.

The sill was above the level of their heads, but both could see that the sash was raised. All was darkness within.

"Come with me," was Cram's next order, and the lieutenant followed. Alphonse was unlocking the front door, and now threw it open. Cram strode into the wide hall-way straight to a door of the east side. It was locked. "Open this, Alphonse," he said.

"I have not the key. It is ever with M'sieu' Lascelles. It is his library."

Cram stepped back, gave one vigorous kick with a heavy riding-boot, and the frail door flew open with a crash. For a moment the darkness was such that no object could be distinguished within. The negro servant hung back, trembling from some indefinable dread. The captain, his hand on the door-knob, stepped quickly into the gloomy apartment, Pierce close at his heels. A broad, flat-topped desk stood in the centre of the room. Some shelves and books were dimly visible against the wall. Some of the drawers of the desk were open, and there was a litter of papers on the desk, and others were strown in the big rattan chair, some on the floor. Two student-lamps could be dimly distinguished, one on the big desk, another on a little reading-table placed not far from the south window, whose blinds, half open, admitted almost the only light that entered the room. With its head near this reading-table and faintly visible, a bamboo lounge stretched its length towards the southward windows, where all was darkness, and something vague and indistinguishable lay extended upon the lounge. Cram marched half-way across the floor, then stopped short, glanced down, stepped quickly to one side, shifting his heavily-booted feet as though to avoid some such muddy pool as those encountered without.

"Take care," he whispered, and motioned warningly to Pierce. "Come here and open these shutters, Alphonse," were the next words. But once again that prolonged, dismal, mournful howl was heard under the south window, and the negro, seized with uncontrollable panic, turned back and clung trembling to the opposite wall.

"Send one of the men for the post surgeon at once, then come back here," said the captain, and Pierce hastened to the gate. As he returned, the west shutters were being thrown open. There was light when he re-entered the room, and this was what he saw. On the China matting, running from underneath the sofa, fed by heavy drops from above, a dark wet stain. On the lounge, stretched at full length, a stiffening human shape, a yellow-white, parchment-like face above the black clothing, a bluish, half-opened mouth whose yellow teeth showed savagely, a fallen chin and jaw, covered with the gray stubble of unshaved beard, and two staring, sightless, ghastly eyes fixed and upturned as though in agonized appeal. Stone-dead,—murdered, doubtless,—all that was left of the little Frenchman Lascelles.

V.

All that day the storm raged in fury; the levee road was blocked in places by the boughs torn from overhanging trees, and here, there, and everywhere turned into a quagmire by the torrents that could find

no adequate egress to the northward swamps. For over a mile above the barracks it looked like one vast canal, and by nine o'clock it was utterly impassable. No cars were running on the dilapidated road to the "half-way house," whatever they might be doing beyond. There was only one means of communication between the garrison and the town, and that, on horseback along the crest of the levee, and people in the second-story windows of the store- and dwelling-houses along the other side of the way, driven aloft by the drenched condition of the ground floor, were surprised to see the number of times some Yankee soldier or other made the dismal trip. Cram, with a party of four, was perhaps the first. Before the dripping sentries of the old guard were relieved at nine o'clock every man and woman at the barracks was aware that foul murder had been done during the night, and that old Lascelles, slain by some unknown hand, slashed and hacked in a dozen places, according to the stories afloat, lay in his gloomy old library up the levee road, with a flood already a foot deep wiping out from the grounds about the house all traces of his assailants. Dr. Denslow, in examining the body, found just one deep, downward stab, entering above the upper rib and doubtless reaching the heart,—a stab made by a long, straight, sharp, two-edged blade. He had been dead evidently some hours when discovered by Cram, who had now gone to town to warn the authorities, old Brax meantime having taken upon himself the responsibility of placing a guard at the house, with orders to keep Alphonse and his mother in and everybody else out.

It is hardly worth while to waste time on the various theories advanced in the garrison as to the cause and means of the dreadful climax. That Doyle should be away from the post provoked neither comment nor speculation: he was not connected in any way with the tragedy. But the fact that Mr. Waring was absent all night, coupled with the stories of his devotions to Madame, was to several minds *prima facie* evidence that his was the bloody hand that wrought the deed,—that he was now a fugitive from justice, and Madame Lascelles, beyond doubt, the guilty partner of his flight. Everybody knew by this time of their being together much of the morning: how could people help knowing, when Dryden had seen them? In his elegantly jocular way, Dryden was already condoling with Ferry on the probable loss of his Hatfield clothes, and comforting him with the assurance that they always gave a feller a new black suit to be hanged in, so he might get his duds back after all, only they must get Waring first. Jeffers doubtless would have been besieged with questions but for Cram's foresight: his master had ordered him to accompany him to town.

In silence a second time the little party rode away, passing the flooded homestead where lay the murdered man, then, farther on, gazing in mute curiosity at the closed shutters of the premises some infantry satirists had already christened "the dove-cot." What cared they for him or his objectionable helpmate? Still, they could not but note how gloomy and deserted it all appeared, with two feet of water lapping the garden wall. Summoned by his master, Jeffers knuckled his oil-skin hat-brim and pointed out the spot where Mr. Waring stood when he knocked the cabman into the mud, but Jeffers's tongue was tied and his

cockney volubility gone. The tracks made by Cram's wagon up the slope were already washed out. Bending forward to dodge the blinding storm, the party pushed along the embankment until at last the avenues and alleys to their right gave proof of better drainage. At Rampart Street they separated, Pierce going on to report the tragedy to the police, Cram turning to his right and following the broad thoroughfare another mile, until Jeffers, indicating a big, old-fashioned, broad-galleried Southern house standing in the midst of grounds once trim and handsome, but now showing signs of neglect and penury, simply said, "'Ere, sir." And here the party dismounted.

Cram entered the gate and pulled a clanging bell. The door was almost instantly opened by a colored girl, at whose side, with eager joyous face, was the pretty child he had seen so often playing about the Lascelles homestead, and the eager joyous look faded instantly away.

"She t'ink it M'sieur Vareeng who comes to arrive," explained the smiling colored girl.

"Ah! It is Madame d'Hervilly I wish to see," answered Cram, briefly. "Please take her my card." And, throwing off his dripping rain-coat and tossing it to Jeffers, who had followed to the veranda, the captain stepped within the hall and held forth his hands to Nin Nin, begging her to come to him who was so good a friend of Mr. Waring. But she would not. The tears of disappointment were in the dark eyes as the little one turned and ran away. Cram could hear the gentle, soothing tones of the mother striving to console her little one, —the one widowed and the other orphaned by the tidings he bore. Even then he noted how musical, how full of rich melody, was that soft Creole voice. And then Madame d'Hervilly appeared, a stately, dignified, picturesque gentlewoman of perhaps fifty years. She greeted him with punctilious civility, but with manner as distant as her words were few.

"I have come on a trying errand," he began, when she held up a slender, jewelled hand.

"*Pardon. Permettez.*—Madame Lascelles," she called, and before Cram could find words to interpose, a servant was speeding to summon the very woman he had hoped not to have to see.

"Oh, madame," he murmured low, hurriedly, "I deplore my ignorance. I cannot speak French. Try to understand me. Mr. Lascelles is home, dangerously stricken. I fear the worst. You must tell her."

"'Ome! *Là bas? C'est impossible.*"

"It is true," he burst in, for the swish of silken skirt was heard down the long passage. "*Il est mort,—mort,*" he whispered, mustering up what little French he knew and then cursing himself for an imbecile.

"*Mort! O ciel!*" The words came with a shriek of anguish from the lips of the elder woman and were echoed by a scream from beyond. In an instant, wild-eyed, horror-stricken, Emilie Lascelles had sprung to her tottering mother's side.

"When? What mean you?" she gasped.

"Madame Lascelles," he sadly spoke, "I had hoped to spare you this, but it is too late now. Mr. Lascelles was found lying on the sofa in his library this morning. He had died hours before, during the night."

And then he had to spring and catch the fainting woman in his arms. She was still moaning, and only semi-conscious, when the old family doctor and her brother, Pierre d'Hervilly, arrived.

Half an hour later Cram astonished the aides-de-camp and other bored staff officials by appearing at the general loafing-room at headquarters. To the chorus of inquiry as to what brought him up in such a storm he made brief reply, and then asked immediately to speak with the adjutant-general and Lieutenant Reynolds, and, to the disgust and mystification of all the others, he disappeared with these into an adjoining room. There he briefly told the former of the murder, and then asked for a word with the junior.

Reynolds was a character. Tall, handsome, and distinguished, he had served throughout the war as a volunteer, doing no end of good work, and getting many a word of praise, but, as all his service was as a staff officer, it was his general who reaped the reward of his labors. He had risen, of course, to the rank of major in the staff in the volunteers, and everybody had prophesied that he would be appointed a major in the adjutant- or inspector-general's department in the permanent establishment. But there were not enough places by any means, and the few vacancies went to men who knew better how to work for themselves. "Take a lieutenancy now, and we will fix you by and by," was the suggestion, and so it resulted that here he was three years after the war wearing the modest strap of a second lieutenant, doing the duties and accepting the responsibilities of a far higher grade, and being patronized by seniors who were as much his inferiors in rank as they were in ability during the war days. Everybody said it was a shame, and nobody helped to better his lot. He was a man whose counsel was valuable on all manner of subjects. Among other things, he was well versed in all that pertained to the code of honor as it existed in the ante-bellum days,—had himself been "out," and, as was well known, had but recently officiated as second for an officer who had need of his services. He and Waring were friends from the start, and Cram counted on tidings of his absent subaltern in appealing to him. Great, therefore, was his consternation when in reply to his inquiry Reynolds promptly answered that he had neither seen nor heard from Waring in over forty-eight hours. This was a facer.

"What's wrong, Cram?"

"Read that," said the captain, placing a daintily-written note in the aide-de-camp's hand. It was brief, but explicit:

"Colonel Braxton: Twice have I warned you that the attentions of your Lieutenant Waring to Madame Lascelles meant mischief. This morning, under pretence of visiting her mother, she left the house in a cab, but in half an hour was seen driving with Mr. Waring. This has been, as I have reason to know, promptly carried to Monsieur Lascelles by people whom he had employed for the purpose. I could of told you last night that Monsieur Lascelles's friend had notified

Lieutenant Waring that a duel would be exacted should he be seen with Madame again, and now it will certainly come. You have seen fit to scorn my warnings hitherto, the result is on your head." There was no signature whatever.

"Who wrote this rot?" asked Reynolds. "It seems to me I've seen that hand before."

"So have I, and pitched the trash into the fire, as I do everything anonymous that comes my way. But Brax says that this is the second or third, and he's worried about it, and thinks there may be truth in the story."

"As to the duel, or as to the devotions to Madame?" asked Reynolds, calmly.

"We-ll, both, and we thought you would be most apt to know whether a fight was on. Waring promised to return to the post at taps last night. Instead of that, he is gone,—God knows where,—and the old man, the reputed challenger, lies dead at his home. Isn't that ugly?"

Reynolds's face grew very grave.

"Who last saw Waring, that you know of?"

"My man Jeffers left him on Canal Street just after dark last night. He was then going to dine with friends at the St. Charles."

"The Allertons?"

"Yes."

"Then wait till I see the chief, and I'll go with you. Say nothing about this matter yet."

Reynolds was gone but a moment. A little later Cram and the aide were at the St. Charles rotunda, their cards sent up to the Allertons' rooms. Presently down came the bell-boy. Would the gentlemen walk up to the parlor? This was awkward. They wanted to see Allerton himself, and Cram felt morally confident that Miss Flora Gwendolen would be on hand to welcome and chat with so distinguished a looking fellow as Reynolds. There was no help for it, however. It would be possible to draw off the head of the family after a brief call upon the ladies. Just as they were leaving the marble-floored rotunda, a short, swarthy man in "pepper-and-salt" business suit touched Cram on the arm, begged a word, and handed him a card.

"A detective,—already?" asked Cram, in surprise.

"I was with the chief when Lieutenant Pierce came in to report the matter," was the brief response, "and I came here to see your man. He is reluctant to tell what he knows without your consent. Could you have him leave the horses with your orderly below and come up here a moment?"

"Why, certainly, if you wish; but I can't see why," said Cram, surprised.

"You will see, sir, in a moment."

And then Jeffers, with white, troubled face, appeared, and twisted his wet hat-brim in nervous worriment.

"Now what do you want of him?" asked Cram.

"Ask him, sir, who was the man who slipped a greenback into his hand at the ladies' entrance last evening. What did he want of him?"

Jeffers turned a greenish yellow. His every impulse was to lie, and the detective saw it.

"You need not lie, Jeffers," he said, very quietly. "It will do no good. I saw the men. I can tell your master who one of them was, and possibly lay my hands on the second when he is wanted; but I want you to tell and to explain what that greenback meant."

Then Jeffers broke down and merely blubbered.

"Hi meant no 'arm, sir. Hi never dreamed there was hanythink wrong. 'Twas Mr. Lascelles, sir. 'E said 'e came to thank me for 'elping 'is lady, sir. Then 'e wanted to see Mr. Warink, sir."

"Why didn't you tell me of this before?" demanded the captain, sternly. "You know what happened this morning."

"Hi didn't want to 'ave Mr. Warink suspected, sir," was poor Jeffers's half-tearful explanation, as Mr. Allerton suddenly entered the little hall-way room.

The grave, troubled faces caught his eye at once.

"Is anything wrong?" he inquired, anxiously. "I hope Waring is all right. I tried to induce him not to start, but he said he had promised and must go."

"What time did he leave you, Mr. Allerton?" asked Cram, controlling as much as possible the tremor of his voice.

"Soon after the storm broke,—about nine-thirty, I should say. He tried to get a cab earlier, but the drivers wouldn't agree to go down for anything less than a small fortune. Luckily, his Creole friends had a carriage."

"His what?"

"His friends from near the barracks. They were here when we came down into the rotunda to smoke after dinner."

Cram felt his legs and feet grow cold and a chill run up his spine.

"Who were they? Did you catch their names?"

"Only one. I was introduced only as they were about to drive away. A little old fellow with elaborate manners,—a Monsieur Lascelles."

"And Waring drove away with him?"

"Yes, with him and one other. Seemed to be a friend of Lascelles. Drove off in a closed carriage with a driver all done up in rubber and oil-skin who said he perfectly knew the road. Why, what's gone amiss?"

VI.

And all day long the storm beat upon the substantial buildings of the old barracks and flooded the low ground about the sheds and stables. Drills for the infantry were necessarily suspended, several sentries, even, being taken off their posts. The men clustered in the squad-rooms and listened with more or less credulity to the theories and confirmatory statements of fact as related by the imaginative or loquacious of their number. The majority of the officers gathered under the flaring lamp-lights at the sutler's store and occupied themselves pretty much as did their inferiors in grade, though poker and

punch—specialties of Mr. Finkbein, the sutler—lent additional color to the stories in circulation.

From this congress the better element of the commissioned force was absent, the names, nationalities, and idiomatic peculiarities of speech of the individual members being identical in most instances with those of their comrades in arms in the ranks. "Brax" had summoned Minor, Lawrence, Kinsey, and Dryden to hear what the post surgeon had to say on his return, but cautioned them to keep quiet. As a result of this precaution, the mystery of the situation became redoubled by one o'clock, and was intensified by two, when it was announced that Private Dawson had attempted to break away out of the hospital after a visit from the same doctor in his professional capacity. People were tempted out on their galleries in the driving storm, and colored servants flitted from kitchen to kitchen to gather or dispense new rumors, but nobody knew what to make of it when, soon after two, an orderly rode in from town dripping with mud and wet, delivered a note to the colonel, and took one from him to Mr. Ferry, now sole representative of the officers of Battery "X" present for duty. Ferry in return sent the bedraggled horseman on to the battery quarters with an order to the first sergeant, and in about fifteen minutes a sergeant and two men, mounted and each leading a spare horse, appeared under Ferry's gallery, and that officer proceeded to occupy one of the vacant saddles, and, followed by his party, went clattering out of the sally-port and splashing over to the levee. Stable-call sounded as usual at four o'clock, and, for the first time in the record of that disciplined organization since the devastating hand of Yellow Jack was laid upon it the previous year, no officer appeared to supervise the grooming and feeding. Two of them were at the post, however. Mr. Doyle, in arrest on charge of absence without leave, was escorted to his quarters about four-fifteen, and was promptly visited by sympathizing and inquisitive comrades from the Hotel Finkbein, while Mr. Ferry, who had effected the arrest, was detained making his report to the post commander. Night came on apace, the wind began to die away with the going down of the sun, the rain ceased to fall, a pallid moon began peering at odd intervals through rifts in the cloudy veil, when Cram rode plashing into barracks, worn with anxiety and care, at eleven o'clock, and, stopping only for a moment to take his wife in his arms and kiss her anxious face and shake his head in response to her eager query for news of Waring, he hurried down-stairs again and over to Doyle's quarters. All was darkness there, but he never hesitated. Tramping loudly over the gallery, he banged at the door, then, turning the knob, intending to burst right in, as was the way in the rough old days, was surprised to find the bolt set.

"Doyle, open. I want to see you at once."

All silence within.

"Doyle, open, or, if you are too drunk to get up, I'll kick in the door."

A groan, a whispered colloquy, then the rattle of bolt and chain. The door opened about an inch, and an oily Irish voice inquired,—

"Hwat's wanted, capt'in?"

"You here?" exclaimed Cram, in disgust. "What business have you in this garrison? If the colonel knew it, you'd be driven out at the point of the bayonet."

"Sure where should wife be but at her husband's side whin he's sick and sufferin'? Didn't they root him out of bed and comfort this day and ride him down like a felon in all the storm? Sure it was the doughboys' orders, sir. I told Doyle the capt'in niver would have——"

"Oh, be quiet: I must see Doyle, and at once."

"Sure he's not able, capt'in. You know how it is wid him: he's that sinsitive he couldn't bear to talk of the disgrace he's bringin' on the capt'in and the batthery, and I knowed he'd been dhrinkin', sir, and I came back to look for him, but he'd got started, capt'in, and it's——"

"Stop this talk! He wasn't drinking at all until you came back here to hound him. Open that door, or a file of the guard will."

"Och! thin wait till I'm dressed, fur dacency's sake, capt'in. Sure I'll thry and wake him."

And then more whispering, the clink of glass, maudlin protestation in Doyle's thick tones. Cram banged at the door and demanded instant obedience. Admitted at last, he strode to the side of an ordinary hospital cot, over which the mosquito-bar was now ostentatiously drawn, and upon which was stretched the bulky frame of the big Irishman, his red, blear-eyed, bloated face half covered in his arms. The close air reeked with the fumes of whiskey. In her distress lest Jim should take too much, the claimant of his name and protection had evidently been sequestrating a large share for herself.

"How on earth did you get here? Your house was flooded all day," angrily asked Cram.

"Sure we made a raft, sir,—'Louette and me,—and poled over to the levee, and I walked every fut of the way down to follow me husband, as I swore I would whin we was married. I'd 'a' come in Anatole's boat, sir, but 'twas gone,—gone since last night. Did ye know that, capt'in?"

A groan and a feverish toss from the occupant of the narrow bed interrupted her.

"Hush, Jim darlin'! Here's the capt'in to see you and tell you he's come back to have you roighted. Sure how could a poor fellow be expected to come home in all that awful storm this morning, capt'in? 'Tis for not comin' the colonel had him under arrest; but I tell him the capt'in 'll see him through."

But Cram pushed her aside as she still interposed between him and the bed.

"Doyle, look up and answer. Doyle, I say!"

Again vehement protestations, and now an outburst of tears and pleadings, from the woman.

"Oh, he can't understand you, capt'in. Ah, don't be hard on him. Only this mornin' he was sayin' how the capt'in reminded him of the ould foine days whin the officers was all gintlemen and soldiers. He's truer to ye than all the rest of thim, sir. D'ye moind that, capt'in?

Ye wouldn't belave it, mabby, but there's them that can tell ye Loot'nant Waring was no friend of yours, sir, and worse than that, if ould Lascelles could spake now—but there's thim left that can, glory be to God!"

"Oh, for God's sake shut up!" spoke Cram, roughly, goaded beyond all patience. "Doyle, answer me!" And he shook him hard. "You were at the Pelican last night, and you saw Mr. Waring and spoke with him. What did he want of you? Where did he go? Who were with him? Was there any quarrel? Answer, I say! Do you know?" But maudlin moaning and incoherencies were all that Cram could extract from the prostrate man. Again the woman interposed, eager, tearful.

"Sure he was there, capt'in, he *was* there; he told me of it whin I fetched him home last night to git him out of the storm and away from that place; but he's too dhrunk now to talk. Sure there was no gettin' down here to barx for anybody. The cabman, sir, said no carriage could make it."

"What cabman? That's one thing I want to know. Who is he? What became of him?"

"Sure and how do I know, sir? He was a quiet, dacent man, sir; the same that Mr. Waring bate so cruel and made Jeffers kick and bate him too. I saw it all."

"And was he at the Pelican last night? I must know."

"Sure he was indade, sir. Doyle said so whin I fetched him home, and though he can't tell you now, sir, he told me thin. They all came down to the Pelican, sir, Waring and Lascelles and the other gintleman, and they had dhrink, and there was trouble between the Frenchman and Waring,—sure you can't blame him, wid his wife goin' on so wid the loot'nant all the last month,—and blows was struck, and Doyle interposed to stop it, sir, loike the gintleman that he is, and the cab-driver took a hand and pitched him out into the mud. Sure he'd been dhrinkin' a little, sir, and was aisy upset, but that's all he knows. The carriage drove away, and there was three of thim, and poor Doyle got caught out there in the mud and in the storm, and 'twas me wint out wid Dawson and another of the byes and fetched him in. And we niver heerd of the murther at all at all, sir, until I came down here to-day, that's God's troot', and he'll tell ye so whin he's sober," she ended, breathless, reckless of her descriptive confusion of Doyle and Divinity.

And still the Irishman lay there, limp, soggy, senseless, and at last, dismayed and disheartened, the captain turned away.

"Promise to sober him up by reveille, and you may stay. But hear this: if he cannot answer for himself by that time, out you go in the battery cart with a policeman to take you to the calaboose." And then he left.

No sooner had his footsteps died away than the woman turned on her patient, now struggling to a sitting posture.

"Lie still, you thafe and cur, and swear you to every word I say, unless you'd hang in his place. Dhrink this, now, and go to slape, and be riddy to tell the story I give ye in the mornin', or may the

knife ye drove in that poor mummy's throat come back to cut your coward heart out."

And Doyle, shivering, sobbing, crazed with drink and fear, covered his eyes with his hands and threw himself back on his hot and steaming pillow.

The morning sun rose brilliant and cloudless as the horses of the battery came forth from the dark interior of the stable and, after watering at the long wooden trough on the platform, were led away by their white-frocked grooms, each section to its own picket-line. Ferry, supervising the duty, presently caught sight of the tall muscular form of his captain coming briskly around the corner, little Pierce tripping along by his side. Cram acknowledged the salute of the battery officer of the day in hurried fashion.

"Good-morning, Ferry," he said. "Tell me, who were there when you got Doyle away from that woman yesterday?"

"Only the three, sir,—Mr. and Mrs. Doyle and the negro girl."

"No sign of anybody else?"

"None, sir. I didn't go in the house at all. I rode in the gate and called for Doyle to come out. The woman tried to parley, but I refused to recognize her at all, and presently Doyle obeyed without any trouble whatever, though she kept up a tirade all the time and said he was too sick to ride, and all that, but he wasn't. He seemed dazed, but not drunk,—certainly not sick. He rode all right, only he shivered and crossed himself and moaned when he passed the Lascelles place, for that hound pup set up a howl just as we were opposite the gate. He was all trembling when we reached the post, and took a big drink the moment he got to his room."

"Ye-es, he's been drinking ever since. I've just sent the doctor to see him. Let the corporal and one man of the guard go with the ambulance to escort Mrs. Doyle out of the garrison and take her home. She shall not stay."

"Why, she's gone, sir," said Ferry. "The guard told me she went out of the back gate and up the track towards Anatole's—going for all she was worth—just after dawn."

"The mischief she has! What can have started her? Did you see her yourself, Sergeant Bennett?" asked the captain of a stocky little Irish soldier, standing at the moment with drawn sabre awaiting opportunity to speak to his commander.

"Yes, sir," and the sabre came flashing up to the present. "She'd wint over to the hospital to get some medicine for the lieutenant just after our bugle sounded first call, and she came runnin' out as I wint to call the officer of the day, sir. She ran back to the lieutenant's quarters ahead of me, and was up only a minute or two whin down she came again wid some bundles, and away she wint to the north gate, runnin' wild-like. The steward told me a moment after of Dawson's escape."

"Dawson! escaped from hospital?"

"Yes, sir. They thought he was all right last evening when he was sleeping, and took the sentry off, and at four this morning he was gone."

VII.

Forty-eight hours had passed, and not a trace had been found of Lieutenant Waring. The civil officers of the law had held grave converse with the seniors on duty at the barracks, and Cram's face was lined with anxiety and trouble. The formal inquest was held as the flood subsided, and the evidence of the post surgeon was most important. About the throat of the murdered man were indubitable marks of violence. The skin was torn as by finger-nails, the flesh bruised and discolored as by fiercely-grasping fingers. But death, said the doctor, was caused by the single stab. Driven downward with savage force, a sharp-pointed, two-edged, straight-bladed knife had pierced the heart, and all was over in an instant. One other wound there was, a slashing cut across the stomach, which had let a large amount of blood, but might possibly not have been mortal. What part the deceased had taken in the struggle could only be conjectured. A little five-chambered revolver which he habitually carried was found on the floor close at hand. Two charges had been recently fired, for the barrel was black with powder; but no one had heard a shot.

The bar-keeper at the Pelican could throw but little light on the matter. The storm had broken, he said, with sudden fury. The rain dashed in torrents against his western front, and threatened to beat in the windows. He called to the two men who happened to be seated at a table to assist him, and was busy trying to get up the shutters, when Lieutenant Doyle joined them and rendered timely aid. He had frequently seen Doyle before during the previous month. Mrs. Doyle lived in the old Lemaître house in the block below, and he often supplied them with whiskey. They drank nothing but whiskey. As they ran in the side door they were surprised to see the lights of a carriage standing at the edge of the banquette, and the driver begged for shelter for his team, saying some gentlemen had gone inside. The bar-keeper opened a gate, and the driver put his horses under a shed in a paved court in the rear, then came in for a drink. Meantime, said the bar-keeper, whose name was Bonelli, three gentlemen who were laughing over their escape from the storm had ordered wine and gone into a private room, Doyle with them. The only one he knew was Monsieur Lascelles, though he had seen one of the others frequently as he rode by, and knew him to be an officer before Mr. Doyle slapped him on the back and hailed him as "Sammy, old buck!" or something like that. Mr. Doyle had been drinking, and the gentleman whispered to him not to intrude just then, and evidently wanted to get rid of him, but Mr. Lascelles, who had ordered the wine, demanded to be introduced, and would take no denial, and invited Mr. Doyle to join them, and ordered more wine. And then Bonelli saw that Lascelles himself was excited by drink,—the first time he had ever noticed it in the year he had known him. The third gentleman he had never seen before, and could only say he was dark and sallow and did not talk, except to urge the driver to make haste,—they must go on; but he spoke in a low tone with Mr. Lascelles as they went to the room, and presently the rain seemed to let up a little, though it

blew hard, and the driver went out and looked around and then returned to the private room where the gentlemen were having their wine, and there was some angry talk, and he came out in a few minutes very mad; said he wouldn't be hired to drive that party any farther, or any other party, for that matter; that no carriage could go down the levee; and then he got out his team and drove back to town; and then Bonelli could hear sounds of altercation in the room, and Mr. Doyle's voice, very angry, and the strange gentleman came out, and one of the men who'd been waiting said he had a cab, if that would answer, and he'd fetch it right off, and by the time he got back it was raining hard again, and he took his cab in under the shed where the carriage had been, and a couple of soldiers from the barracks then came in, wet and cold, and begged for a drink, and Bonelli knew one of them, called Dawson, and trusted him, as he often had done before. When Dawson heard Lieutenant Doyle's drunken voice he said there'd be trouble getting him home, and he'd better fetch Mrs. Doyle, and while he was gone Lascelles came out, excited, and threw down a twenty-dollar bill and ordered more Krug and some brandy, and there was still loud talk, and when Bonelli carried in the bottles Doyle was sitting back in a chair, held down by the other officer, who was laughing at him, but nevertheless had a knife in hand,—a long, sharp, two-edged knife,—and Doyle was calling him names, and was very drunk, and soon after they all went out into the rear court, and Doyle made more noise, and the cab drove away around the corner, going down the levee through the pouring rain, one man on the box with the driver. That was the last he saw. Then Mrs. Doyle came in mad, and demanded her husband, and they found him reeling about the dark court, swearing and muttering, and Dawson and she took him off between them. This must have been before eleven o'clock; and that was absolutely all he knew.

Then Mr. Allerton had told his story again, without throwing the faintest light on the proceedings, and the hack-driver was found, and frankly and fully told his: that Lascelles and another gentleman hired him about eight o'clock to drive them down to the former's place, which they said was several squares above the barracks. He said that he would have to charge them eight dollars such a night anywhere below the old cotton-press, where the pavement ended. But then they had delayed starting nearly an hour, and took another gentleman with them, and that driven by the storm to shelter at the Pelican saloon, three squares below where the pavement ended, and he asked for his money, saying he dare go no farther in the darkness and the flood, the Frenchman wouldn't pay, because he hadn't taken them all the way. He pointed out that he had to bring another gentleman and had to wait a long time, and demanded his eight dollars. The other gentleman, whom he found to be one of the officers at the barracks, slipped a bill into his hand and said it was all he had left, and if it wasn't enough he'd pay him the next time he came to town. But the others were very angry, and called him an Irish thief, and then the big soldier in uniform said he wouldn't have a man abused because he was Irish, and Lieutenant Waring, as he understood the name of this

other officer to be, told him, the witness, to slip out and say no more, that he'd fix it all right, and that was the last he saw of the party, but he heard loud words and the sound of a scuffle as he drove away.

And Madame d'Hervilly had given her testimony, which, translated, was to this effect. She had known the deceased these twenty years. He had been in the employ of her lamented husband, who died of the fever in '55, and Monsieur had succeeded to the business, and made money, and owned property in town, besides the old family residence on the levee below. He was wedded to Emilie only a little while before the war, and lived at home all through, but business languished then, they had to contribute much, and his younger brother, Monsieur Philippe, had cost him a great deal. Philippe was an officer in the Zouaves raised in 1861 among the French Creoles, and marched with them to Columbus, and was wounded and came home to be nursed, and Emilie took care of him for weeks and months, and then he went back to the war and fought bravely, and was shot again and brought home, and this time Monsieur Lascelles did not want to have him down at the house; he said it cost too much to get the doctors down there: so he came under Madame's roof, and she was very fond of the boy, and Emilie would come sometimes and play and sing for him. When the war was over Monsieur Lascelles gave him money to go to Mexico with Maximilian, and when the French were recalled many deserted and came over to New Orleans, and Monsieur Lascelles was making very little money now, and had sold his town property, and he borrowed money of her to help, as he said, Philippe again, who came to visit him, and he was often worried by Philippe's letters begging for money. Seven thousand dollars now he owed her, and only last week had asked for more. Philippe was in Key West to buy an interest in some cigar-business. Monsieur Lascelles said if he could raise three thousand to reach Philippe this week they would all make money, but Emilie begged her not to, she was afraid it would all go, and on the very day before he was found dead he came to see her in the afternoon on Rampart Street, and Emilie had told her of Mr. Waring's kindness to her and to Nin Nin, and how she never could have got up after being dragged into the mud by that drunken cabman, "and she begged me to explain the matter to her husband, who was a little vexed with her because of Mr. Waring." But he spoke only about the money, and did not reply about Mr. Waring, except that he would see him and make proper acknowledgment of his civility. He seemed to think only of the money, and said Philippe had written again and must have help, and he was angry at Emilie because she would not urge with him, and Emilie wept, and he went away in anger, saying he had business to detain him in town until morning, when he would expect her to be ready to return with him.

Much of this testimony was evoked by pointed queries of the officials, who seemed somewhat familiar with Lascelles's business and family affairs, and who then declared that they must question the stricken widow. Harsh and unfeeling as this may have seemed, there were probably reasons which atoned for it. She came in on the arm of the old family physician, looking like a drooping flower, with little

Nin Nin clinging to her hand. She was so shocked and stunned that she could barely answer the questions put to her with all courtesy and gentleness of manner. No, she had never heard of any quarrel between Monsieur Lascelles and his younger brother. Yes, Philippe had been nursed by her through his wounds. She was fond of Philippe, but not so fond as was her husband. Mr. Lascelles would do anything for Philippe, deny himself anything almost. Asked if Monsieur Lascelles had not given some reason for his objection to Philippe's being nursed at his house when he came home the second time, she was embarrassed and distressed. She said Philippe was an impulsive boy, fancied himself in love with his brother's wife, and Armand saw something of this, and at last upbraided him, but very gently. There was no quarrel at all. Was there any one whom Monsieur Lascelles had been angered with on her account? She knew of none, but blushed, and blushed painfully. Had the deceased not recently objected to the attentions paid her by other gentlemen? There was a murmur of reproach among the hearers, but Madame answered unflinchingly, though with painful blushes and tears. Monsieur Lascelles had said nothing of disapproval until very recently; *au contraire*, he had much liked Mr. Waring. He was the only one of the officers at the barracks whom he had ever invited to the house, and he talked with him a great deal; had never, even to her, spoken of a quarrel with him because Mr. Waring had been so polite to her, until within a week or two; then—yes, he certainly had. Of her husband's business affairs, his papers, etc., she knew little. He always had certain moneys, though not large sums, with all his papers, in the drawers of his cabinet, and that they should be in so disturbed a state was not unusual. They were all in order, closed and locked, when he started for town the morning of that fatal day, but he often left them open and in disorder, only then locking his library door. When she left for town, two hours after him, the library door was open, also the side window. She could throw no light on the tragedy. She had no idea who the stranger could be. She had not seen Philippe for nearly a year, and believed him to be at Key West.

Alphonse, the colored boy, was so terrified by the tragedy and by his detention under the same roof with the murdered man that his evidence was only dragged from him. Nobody suspected the poor fellow of complicity in the crime, yet he seemed to consider himself as on trial. He swore he had entered the library only once during the afternoon or evening, and that was to close the shutters when the storm broke. He left a lamp burning low in the hall, according to custom, though he felt sure his master and mistress would remain in town over-night rather than attempt to come down. He had slept soundly, as negroes will, despite the gale and the roar of the rain that drowned all other noises. It was late the next morning when his mother called him. The old mammy was frightened to see the front gate open, the deep water in the streets, and the muddy footprints on the veranda. She called Alphonse, who found that his master must have come in during the night, after all, for the lamp was taken from the hall table, the library door was closed and locked, so was the front

door, also barred within, which it had not been when he went to bed. He tapped at the library, got no answer, so tiptoed to his master's bedroom; it was empty and undisturbed. Neither had Madame nor Mademoiselle Nin Nin been to their rooms. Then he was troubled, and then the soldiers came and called him out into the rain. They could tell the rest.

Cram's story is already told, and he could add nothing. The officials tried to draw the batteryman out as to the relations existing between Lieutenant Waring and Madame, but got badly "bluffed." Cram said he had never seen anything in the faintest degree worthy of comment. Had he heard anything? Yes, but nothing worthy of consideration, much less of repetition. Had he not loaned Mr. Waring his team and carriage to drive Madame to town that morning? No. How did he get it, then? Took it! Was Monsieur Waring in the habit of helping himself to the property of his brother officers? Yes, whenever he felt like it, for they never objected. The legal official thought such spirit of *camaraderie* in the light artillery must make life at the barracks something almost poetic, to which Cram responded, "Oh, at times absolutely idyllic." And the tilt ended with the civil functionary ruffled, and this was bad for the battery. Cram never had any policy whatsoever.

Lieutenant Doyle was the next witness summoned, and a more God-forsaken-looking fellow never sat in a shell jacket. Still in arrest, physically, at the beck of old Braxton, and similarly hampered, intellectually, at the will of bold John Barleycorn, Mr. Doyle came before the civil authorities only upon formal subpœna served at post head-quarters. The post surgeon had straightened him up during the day, but was utterly perplexed at his condition. Mrs. Doyle's appearance in the neighborhood some weeks before had been the signal for a series of sprees on the Irishman's part that had on two occasions so prostrated him that Dr. Potts, an acting assistant surgeon, had been called in to prescribe for him; and, thanks to the vigorous constitution of his patient, had pulled him out in a few hours. But this time "Pills the Less" had found Doyle in a state bordering on terror, even when assured that the quantity of his potations had not warranted an approach to tremens. The post surgeon had been called in too, and "Pills the Pitiless," as he was termed, thanks to his unfailing prescription of quinine and blue mass in the shape and size of buckshot, having no previous acquaintance, in Doyle, with these attacks, pooh-poohed the case, administered bromides and admonition in due proportion, and went off about more important business. Dr. Potts, however, stood by his big patient, wondering what should cause him to start in such terror at every step upon the stair without, and striving to bring sleep to eyes that had not closed the livelong night nor all the balmy, beautiful day. Once he asked if Doyle wished him to send for his wife, and was startled at the vehemence of the reply, "For God's sake, no!" and, shuddering, Doyle had hidden his face and turned away. Potts got him to eat something towards noon, and Doyle begged for more drink, but was refused. He was sober, yet shattered, when Mr. Drake suddenly appeared just about stable-call and bade him repair at

once to the presence of the commanding officer. Then Potts *had* to give him a drink, or he would never have got there. With the aid of a servant he was dressed, and, accompanied by the doctor, reached the office. Braxton looked him over coldly.

"Mr. Doyle," said he, "the civil authorities have made requisition for——" But he had got no further when Doyle staggered, and but for the doctor's help might have fallen.

"For God's sake, colonel, it isn't true! Sure I know nothing of it at all at all, sir. Indade, indade, I was blind dhrunk, colonel. Sure they'd swear a man's life away, sir, just because he was the one—he was the one that——"

"Be silent, sir. You are not accused, that I know of. It is as a witness you are needed.—Is he in condition to testify, doctor?"

"He is well enough, sir, to tell what he knows, but he claims to know nothing." And this, too, Doyle eagerly seconded, but was sent along in the ambulance, with the doctor to keep him out of mischief, and a parting shot to the effect that when the coroner was through with him the post commander would take hold again, so the colonel depressed more than the cocktail stimulated, and, as luck would have it, almost the first person to meet him inside the gloomy enclosure was his wife, and her few whispered words only added to his misery.

The water still lay in pools about the premises, and the police had allowed certain of the neighbors to stream in and stare at the white walls and shaded windows, but only a favored few penetrated the hall-way and rooms where the investigation was being held. Doyle shook like one with the palsy as he ascended the little flight of steps and passed into the open door-way, still accompanied by "Little Pills." People looked at him with marked curiosity. He was questioned, re-questioned, cross-questioned, but the result was only a hopeless tangle. He really added nothing to the testimony of the hack-driver and Bonelli. In abject remorse and misery he begged them to understand he was drunk when he joined the party, got drunker, dimly remembered there was a quarrel, but he had no cause to quarrel with any one, and that was all; he never knew how he got home. He covered his face in his shaking hands at last, and seemed on the verge of a fit of crying.

But then came sensation.

Quietly rising from his seat, the official who so recently had had the verbal tilt with Cram held forth a rusty, cross-hilted, two-edged knife that looked as though it might have lain in the mud and wet for hours.

"Have you ever seen this knife before?" he asked. And Doyle, lifting up his eyes one instant, groaned, shuddered, and said,—

"Oh, my God, yes!"

"Whose property is it or was it?"

At first he would not reply. He moaned and shook. At last—

"Sure the initials are on the top," he cried.

But the official was relentless.

"Tell us what they are and what they represent."

People were crowding the hall-way and forcing themselves into

the room. Cram and Ferry, curiously watching their ill-starred comrade, had exchanged glances of dismay when the knife was so suddenly produced. Now they bent breathlessly forward.

The silence for the moment was oppressive.

"If it's the knife I mane," he sobbed at last, desperately, miserably, "the letters are S. B. W., and it belongs to Lieutenant Waring of our bathery."

But no questioning, however adroit, could elicit from him the faintest information as to how it got there. The last time he remembered seeing it, he said, was on Mr. Waring's table the morning of the review. A detective testified to having found it among the bushes under the window as the water receded. Ferry and the miserable Ananias were called, and they, too, had to identify the knife, and admit that neither had seen it about the room since Mr. Waring left for town. Of other witnesses called, came first the proprietor of the stable to which the cab belonged. Horse and cab, he said, covered with mud, were found under a shed two blocks below the French Market, and the only thing in the cab was a handsome silk umbrella, London make, which Lieutenant Pierce laid claim to. Mrs. Doyle swore that as she was going in search of her husband she met the cab just below the Pelican, driving furiously away, and that in the flash of lightning she recognized the driver as the man whom Lieutenant Waring had beaten that morning on the levee in front of her place. A stranger was seated beside him. There were two gentlemen inside, but she saw the face of only one,—Lieutenant Waring.

Nobody else could throw any light on the matter. The doctor, recalled, declared the knife or dagger was shaped exactly as would have to be the one that gave the death-blow. Everything pointed to the fact that there had been a struggle, a deadly encounter, and that after the fatal work was done the murderer or murderers had left the doors locked and barred and escaped through the window, leaving the desk rifled and carrying away what money there was, possibly to convey the idea that it was only a vulgar murder and robbery, after all.

Of other persons who might throw light upon the tragedy the following were missing: Lieutenant Waring, Private Dawson, the cabman, and the unrecognized stranger. So, too, was Anatole's boat.

VIII.

When four days and nights had passed away without a word or sign from Waring, the garrison had come to the conclusion that those officers or men of Battery "X" who still believed him innocent were idiots. So did the civil authorities; but those were days when the civil authorities of Louisiana commanded less respect from its educated people than did even the military. The police force, like the State, was undergoing a process called reconstruction, which might have been impressive in theory, but was ridiculous in practice. A reward had been offered by business associates of the deceased for the capture and conviction of the assassin. A distant relative of old Lascelles had

come to take charge of the place until Monsieur Philippe should arrive. The latter's address had been found among old Armand's papers, and despatches, *via* Havana, had been sent to him, also letters. Pierre d'Hervilly had taken the weeping widow and little Nin Nin to *bonne maman's* to stay. Alphonse and his woolly-pated mother, true to negro superstitions, had decamped. Nothing would induce them to remain under the roof where foul murder had been done. "De hahnts" was what they were afraid of. And so the old white homestead, though surrounded on every side by curiosity-seekers and prying eyes, was practically deserted. Cram went about his duties with a heavy heart and light aid. Ferry and Pierce both commanded sections now, as Doyle remained in close arrest and "Pills the Less" in close attendance. Something was utterly wrong with the fellow. Mrs. Doyle had not again ventured to show her red nose within the limits of the "barx," as she called them, a hint from Braxton having proved sufficient; but that she was ever scouting the pickets no one could doubt. Morn, noon, and night she prowled about the neighborhood, employing the "byes," so she termed such stray sheep in army blue as a dhrop of Anatole's best would tempt, to carry scrawling notes to Jim, one of which, falling with its postman by the wayside and turned over by the guard to Captain Cram for transmittal, was addressed to Mister Loot'nt James Doyle, Lite Bothery X, Jaxun Barx, and brought the only laughter to his lips the big horse-artilleryman had known for nearly a week. Her customary Mercury, Dawson, had vanished from sight, dropped, with many another and often a better man, as a deserter.

Over at Waring's abandoned quarters the shades were drawn and the green *jalousies* bolted. Pierce stole in each day to see that everything, even to the augmented heap of letters, was undisturbed, and Ananias drooped in the court below and refused to be comforted. Cram had duly notified Waring's relatives, now living in New York, of his strange and sudden disappearance, but made no mention of the cloud of suspicion which had surrounded his name. Meantime, some legal friends of the family were overhauling the Lascelles papers, and a dark-complexioned, thick-set, active little civilian was making frequent trips between department head-quarters and barracks. At the former he compared notes with Lieutenant Reynolds, and at the latter with Braxton and Cram. The last interview Mr. Allerton had before leaving with his family for the North was with this same lively party, the detective who joined them that night at the St. Charles, and Allerton, being a man of much substance, had tapped his pocket-book significantly.

"The difficulty just now is in having a talk with the widow," said this official to Cram and Reynolds, whom he had met by appointment on the Thursday following the eventful Saturday of Braxton's "combined" review. "She is too much prostrated. I've simply got to wait awhile, and meantime go about this other affair. Is there no way in which you can see her?"

Cram relapsed into a brown study. Reynolds was poring over the note written to Braxton and comparing it with one he held in his

hand,—an old one, and one that told an old, old story. "I know you'll say I have no right to ask this," it read, "but you're a gentleman, and I'm a friendless woman deserted by a worthless husband. My own people are ruined by the war, but even if they had money they wouldn't send any to me, for I offended them all by marrying a Yankee officer. God knows I am punished enough for that. But I was so young and innocent when he courted me. I ought to of left—I would of left him as soon as I found out how good-for-nothing he really was, only I was so much in love I couldn't. I was fastenated, I suppose. Now I've sold everything, but if you'll only lend me fifty dollars I'll work my fingers to the bone until I pay it. For the old home's sake, please do."

"It's the same hand,—the same woman, Cram, beyond a doubt. She bled Waring for the old home's sake the first winter he was in the South. He told me all about it two years ago in Washington, when we heard of her the second time. Now she's followed him over here, or got here first, tried the same game probably, met with a refusal, and this anonymous note is her revenge. The man she married was a crack-brained weakling who got into the army the fag end of the war, fell in love with her pretty face, married her, then they quarrelled, and he drank himself into a muddle-head. She ran him into debt; then he gambled away government funds, bolted, was caught, and would have been tried and sent to jail, but some powerful relative saved him that, and simply had him dropped;—never heard of him again. She was about a month grass-widowed when Waring came on his first duty there. He had an uncongenial lot of brother officers for a two-company post, and really had known of this girl and her people before the war, and she appealed to him, first for sympathy and help, then charity, then blackmail, I reckon, from which his fever saved him. Then she struck some quartermaster or other and lived off him for a while; drifted over here, and no sooner did he arrive, all ignorant of her presence in or around New Orleans, than she began pestering him again. When he turned a deaf ear, she probably threatened, and then came these anonymous missives to you and Braxton. Yours always came by mail, you say. The odd thing about the colonel's—this one, at least—is that it was with his mail, but never came through the post-office."

"That's all very interesting," said the little civilian, dryly, "but what we want is evidence to acquit him and convict somebody else of Lascelles's death. What has this to do with the other?"

"This much: This letter came to Braxton by hand, not by mail,—by hand, probably direct from her. What hand had access to the office the day when the whole command was out at review? Certainly no outsider. The mail is opened and distributed on its arrival at nine o'clock by the chief clerk, or by the sergeant-major, if he happens to be there, though he's generally at guard mount. On this occasion he was out at review. Leary, chief clerk, tells Colonel Braxton he opened and distributed the mail, putting the colonel's on his desk; Root was with him and helped. The third clerk came in later; had been out all night, drinking. His name is Dawson. Dawson goes out again and

gets fuller, and when next brought home is put in hospital under a sentry. Then he hears of the murder, bolts, and isn't heard from since, except as the man who helped Mrs. Doyle to get her husband home. *He* is the fellow who brought that note. He knew something of its contents, for the murder terrified him, and he ran away. Find his trail, and you strike that of the woman who wrote these."

"By the Lord, lieutenant, if you'll quit the army and take my place you'll make a name and a fortune."

"And if you'll quit your place and take mine you'll get your *coup de grâce* in some picayune Indian fight and be forgotten. So stay where you are; but find Dawson, find her, find what they know, and you'll be famous."

IX.

That night, or very early next morning, there was pandemonium at the barracks. It was clear, still, beautiful. A soft April wind was drifting up from the lower coast, laden with the perfume of sweet olive and orange blossoms. Mrs. Cram, with one or two lady friends and a party of officers, had been chatting in low tone upon their gallery until after eleven, but elsewhere about the moonlit quadrangle all was silence when the second relief was posted. Far at the rear of the walled enclosure, where, in deference to the manners and customs of war as observed in the good old days whereof our seniors tell, the sutler's establishment was planted within easy hailing-distance of the guard-house, there was still the sound of modified revelry by night, and poker and whiskey punch had gathered their devotees in the grimy parlors of Mr. Finkbein, and here the belated ones tarried until long after midnight, as most of them were bachelors and had no better halves, as had Doyle, to fetch them home "out of the wet." Cram and his lieutenants, with the exception of Doyle, were never known to patronize this establishment, whatsoever they might do outside. They had separated before midnight, and little Pierce, after his customary peep into Waring's preserves, had closed the door, gone to his own room, to bed and to sleep. Ferry, as battery officer of the day, had made the rounds of the stables and gun-shed about one o'clock, and had encountered Captain Kinsey, of the infantry, coming in from his long tramp through the dew-wet field, returning from the inspection of the sentry-post at the big magazine.

"No news of poor Sam yet, I suppose?" said Kinsey, sadly, as the two came strolling in together through the rear gate.

"Nothing whatever," was Ferry's answer. "We cannot even form a conjecture, unless he, too, has been murdered. Think of there being a warrant out for his arrest,—for him, Sam Waring!"

"Well," said Kinsey, "no other conclusion could be well arrived at, unless that poor brute Doyle did it in a drunken row. Pills says he never saw a man so terror-stricken as he seems to be. He's afraid to leave him, really, and Doyle's afraid to be alone,—thinks the old woman may get in."

"She has no excuse for coming, captain," said Ferry. "When

she told Cram she must see her husband to-day, that she was out of money and starving, the captain surprised her by handing her fifty dollars, which is much more than she'd have got from Doyle. She took it, of course, but that isn't what she wanted. She wants to get at him. She has money enough."

"Yes, that woman's a terror, Ferry. Old Mrs. Murtagh, wife of my quartermaster sergeant, has been in the army twenty years, and says she knew her well,—knew all her people. She comes from a tough lot, and they had a bad reputation in Texas in the old days. Doyle's a totally different man since she turned up, Cram tells me. Hello! here's 'Pills the Less,'" he suddenly exclaimed, as they came opposite the west gate, leading to the hospital. "How's your patient, Doc?"

"Well, he's sleeping at last. He seems worn out. It's the first time I've left him, but I'm used up and want a few hours' sleep. There isn't anything to drink in the room, even if he should wake, and Jim is sleeping or lying there by him."

"Oh, he'll do all right now, I reckon," said the officer of the day, cheerfully. "Go and get your sleep. The old woman can't get at him unless she bribes my sentries or rides the air on a broomstick, like some other old witches I've read of. Ferry sleeps in the adjoining room, anyhow, so he can look out for her. Good-night, Doc." And so, on they went, glancing upward at the dim light just showing through the window-blinds in the gable end of Doyle's quarters, and halting at the foot of the stairs.

"Come over and have a pipe with me, Ferry," said the captain. "It's too beautiful a night to turn in. I want to talk to you about Waring, anyhow. This thing weighs on my mind."

"Done with you, for an hour, anyhow!" said Ferry. "Just wait a minute till I run up and get my baccy."

Presently down came the young fellow again, meerschaum in hand, the moonlight glinting on his slender figure, so trim and jaunty in the battery dress. Kinsey looked him over with a smile of soldierly approval and a whimsical comment on the contrast between the appearance of this young artillery sprig and that of his own stout personality, clad as he was in a bulging blue flannel sack-coat, only distinguishable in cut and style from civilian garb by its having brass buttons and a pair of tarnished old shoulder-straps. Ferry was a swell. His shell jacket fitted like wax. The Russian shoulder-knots of twisted gold were of the handsomest make. The riding-breeches, top-boots, and spurs were such that even Waring could not criticise. His sabre gleamed in the moonbeams, and Kinsey's old leather-covered sword looked dingy by contrast. His belt fitted trim and taut, and was polished as his boot-tops; Kinsey's sank down over the left hip, and was worn brown. The sash Ferry sported as battery officer of the day was draped, West Point fashion, over the shoulder and around the waist, and accurately knotted and looped; Kinsey's old war-worn crimson net was slung higgledy-piggledy over his broad chest.

"What swells you fellows are, Ferry!" he said, laughingly, as the youngster came dancing down. "Even old Doyle gets out here in his

scarlet plume occasionally and puts us doughboys to shame. What's the use in trying to make such a rig as ours look soldierly? If it were not for the brass buttons our coats would make us look like parsons and our hats like monkeys. As for this undress, all that can be said in its favor is, you can't spoil it even by sleeping out on the levee in it, as I am sometimes tempted to do. Let's go out there now."

It was perhaps quarter of two when they took their seats on the wooden bench under the trees, and, lighting their pipes, gazed out over the broad sweeping flood of the Mississippi, gleaming like a silvered shield in the moonlight. Far across at the opposite shore the low line of orange-groves and plantation houses and quarters was merged in one long streak of gloom, relieved only at intervals by twinkling light. Farther up-stream, like dozing sea-dogs, the fleet of monitors lay moored along the bank, with the masts and roofs of Algiers dimly outlined against the crescent sweep of lights that marked the levee of the great Southern metropolis, still prostrate from the savage buffeting of the war, yet so soon to rouse from lethargy, resume her sway, and, stretching forth her arms, to draw once again to her bosom the wealth and tribute, tenfold augmented, of the very heart of the nation, until, mistress of the commerce of a score of States, she should rival even New York in the volume of her trade. Below them, away to the east towards English Turn, rolled the tawny flood, each ripple and eddy and swirling pool crested with silver,—the twinkling lights at Chalmette barely distinguishable from dim, low-hanging stars. Midway the black hulk of some big ocean voyager was forging slowly, steadily towards them, the red light of the port side already obscured, the white and green growing with every minute more and more distinct, and, save the faint rustle of the leaves overhead, murmuring under the touch of the soft, southerly night wind, the plash of wavelet against the wooden pier, and the measured foot-fall of the sentry on the flagstone walk in front of the sally-port, not a sound was to be heard.

For a while they smoked in silence, enjoying the beauty of the night, though each was thinking only of the storm that swept over the scene the Sunday previous and of the tragedy that was borne upon its wings. At last Kinsey shook himself together.

"Ferry, sometimes I come out here for a quiet smoke and think. Did it ever occur to you what a fearful force, what illimitable power, there is sweeping by us here night after night with never a sound?"

"Oh, you mean the Mississip," said Ferry, flippantly. "It would be a case of mops and brooms, I fancy, if she were to bust through the bank and sweep us out into the swamps."

"Exactly! that's in case she broke loose, as you say; but even when in the shafts, as she is now, between the levees, how long would it take her to sweep a fellow from here out into the gulf, providing nothing interposed to stop him?"

"Matter of simple mathematical calculation," said Ferry, practically. "They say it's an eight-mile current easy out there in the middle where she's booming. Look at that barrel scooting down yonder. Now, I'd lay a fiver I could cut loose from here at reveille

and shoot the passes before taps and never pull a stroke. It's less than eighty miles down to the forts."

"Well, then, a skiff like that that old Anatole's blaspheming about losing wouldn't take very long to ride over that route, would it?" said Kinsey, reflectively.

"No, not if allowed to slide. But somebody'd be sure to put out and haul it in as a prize,—flotsam and what-you-may-call-'em. You see these old niggers all along here with their skiffs tacking on to every bit of drift-wood that's worth having."

"But, Ferry, do you think they'd venture out in such a storm as Sunday last?—think anything could live in it short of a decked ship?"

"No, probably not. Certainly not Anatole's boat."

"Well, that's just what I'm afraid of, and what Cram and Reynolds dread."

"Do they? Well, so far as that storm's concerned, it would have blown it down-stream until it came to the big bend below here to the east. Then, by rights, it ought to have blown against the left bank. But every inch of it has been scouted all the way to quarantine. The whole river was filled with drift, though, and it might have been wedged in a lot of logs and swept out anyhow. Splendid ship, that! Who is she, do you suppose?"

The great black hull with its lofty tracery of masts and spars was now just about opposite the barracks, slowly and majestically ascending the stream.

"One of those big British freight steamers that moor there below the French Market, I reckon. They seldom come up at night unless it's in the full of the moon, and even then they move with the utmost caution. See, she's slowing up now."

"Hello! Listen! What's that?" exclaimed Ferry, starting to his feet.

A distant, muffled cry. A distant shot. The sentry at the sally-port dashed through the echoing vault, then bang! came the loud roar of his piece, followed by the yell of—

"Fire! fire! *The guard!*"

With one spring Ferry was down the levee and darted like a deer across the road, Kinsey lumbering heavily after. Even as he sped through the stone-flagged way, the hoarse roar of the drum at the guard-house, followed instantly by the blare of the bugle from the battery quarters, sounded the stirring alarm. A shrill, agonized female voice was madly screaming for help. Guards and sentries were rushing to the scene, and flames were bursting from the front window of Doyle's quarters. Swift though Ferry ran, others were closer to the spot. Half a dozen active young soldiers, members of the infantry guard, had sprung to the rescue. When Ferry dashed up to the gallery he was just in time to stumble over a writhing and prostrate form, to help extinguish the blazing clothing of another, to seize his water-bucket and douse its contents over a third,—one yelling, the others stupefied by smoke—or something. In less time than it takes to tell it, daring fellows had ripped down the blazing shades and shutters,

tossed them to the parade beneath, dumped a heap of soaked and smoking bedding out of the rear windows, splashed a few bucketfuls of water about the reeking room, and the fire was out. But the doctors were working their best to bring back the spark of life to two senseless forms, and to still the shrieks of agony that burst from the seared and blistered lips of Bridget Doyle.

While willing hands bore these scorched semblances of humanity to neighboring rooms and tender-hearted women hurried to add their ministering touch, and old Braxton ordered the excited garrison back to quarters and bed, he, with Cram and Kinsey and Ferry, made prompt examination of the premises. On the table two whiskey-bottles, one empty, one nearly full, that Dr. Potts declared were not there when he left at one. On the mantel a phial of chloroform, which was also not there before. But a towel soaked with the stifling contents lay on the floor by Jim's rude pallet, and a handkerchief half soaked, half consumed, was on the chair which had stood by the bedside among the fragments of an overturned kerosene lamp.

A quick examination of the patients showed that Jim, the negro, had been chloroformed and was not burned at all, that Doyle was severely burned and had probably inhaled flames, and that the woman was crazed with drink, terror, and burns combined. It took the efforts of two or three men and the influence of powerful opiates to quiet her. Taxed with negligence or complicity on the part of the sentry, the sergeant of the guard repudiated the idea, and assured Colonel Braxton that it was an easy matter for any one to get either in or out of the garrison without encountering the sentry, and, taking his lantern, led the way out to the hospital grounds by a winding foot-path among the trees to a point in the high white picket fence where two slats had been shoved aside. Any one coming along the street without could pass far beyond the ken of the sentry at the west gate, and slip in with the utmost ease, and once inside, all that was necessary was to dodge possible reliefs and patrols. No sentry was posted at the gate through the wall that separated the garrison proper from the hospital grounds. Asked why he had not reported this, the sergeant smiled and said there were a dozen others just as convenient, so what was the use? He did not say, however, that he and his fellows had recourse to them night after night.

It was three o'clock when the officers' families fairly got settled down again and back to their beds, and the silence of night once more reigned over Jackson Barracks. One would suppose that such a scene of terror and excitement was enough, and that now the trembling, frightened women might be allowed to sleep in peace; but it was not to be. Hardly had one of their number closed her eyes, hardly had all the flickering lights, save those at the hospital and guard-house, been downed again, when the strained nerves of the occupants of the officers' quadrangle were jumped into mad jangling once more and all the barracks aroused a second time, and this, too, by a woman's shriek of horror.

Mrs. Conroy, a delicate, fragile little body, wife of a junior lieutenant of infantry occupying a set of quarters in the same building

with, but at the opposite end from, Pierce and Waring, was found lying senseless at the head of the gallery stairs.

When revived, amid tears and tremblings and incoherent exclamations she declared that she had gone down to the big ice-chest on the ground-floor to get some milk for her nervous and frightened child and was hurrying noiselessly up the stairs again,—the only means of communication between the first and second floors,—when, face to face, in front of his door, she came upon Mr. Waring, or his ghost; that his eyes were fixed and glassy; that he did not seem to see her even when he spoke, for speak he did. His voice sounded like a moan of anguish, she said, but the words were distinct: "Where is my knife? Who has taken my knife?"

And then little Pierce, who had helped to raise and carry the stricken woman to her room, suddenly darted out on the gallery and ran along to the door he had closed four hours earlier. It was open. Striking a match, he hurried through into the chamber beyond, and there, face downward upon the bed, lay his friend and comrade Waring, moaning like one in the delirium of fever.

X.

Lieutenant Reynolds was seated at his desk at department headquarters about nine o'clock that morning when an orderly in light-battery dress dismounted at the banquette and came up the stairs three at a jump. "Captain Cram's compliments, sir, and this is immediate," he reported, as he held forth a note. Reynolds tore it open, read it hastily through, then said, "Go and fetch me a cab quick as you can," and disappeared in the general's room. Half an hour later he was spinning down the levee towards the French Market, and before ten o'clock was seated in the captain's cabin of the big British steamer Ambassador, which had arrived at her moorings during the night. Cram and Kinsey were already there, and to them the skipper was telling his story.

Off the Tortugas, just about as they had shaped their course for the Belize, they were hailed by the little steamer Tampa, bound from New Orleans to Havana. The sea was calm, and a boat put off from the Tampa and came alongside, and presently a gentleman was assisted aboard. He seemed weak from illness, but explained that he was Lieutenant Waring, of the United States Artillery, had been accidentally carried off to sea, and the Ambassador was the first inward-bound ship they had sighted since crossing the bar. He would be most thankful for a passage back to New Orleans. Captain Baird had welcomed him with the heartiness of the British tar, and made him at home in his cabin. The lieutenant was evidently far from well, and seemed somewhat dazed and mentally distressed. He could give no account of his mishap other than that told him by the officers of the Tampa, which had lain to when overtaken by the gale on Saturday night, and on Sunday morning when they resumed their course downstream they overhauled a light skiff and were surprised to find a man

aboard, drenched and senseless. "The left side of his face was badly bruised and discolored, even when he came to us," said Baird, "and he must have been slugged and robbed, for his watch, his seal-ring, and what little money he had were all gone." The second officer of the Tampa had fitted him out with a clean shirt, and the steward dried his clothing as best he could, but the coat was stained and clotted with blood. Mr. Waring had slept heavily much of the way back until they passed Pilot Town. Then he was up and dressed Thursday afternoon, and seemingly in better spirits, when he picked up a copy of the New Orleans *Picayune* which the pilot had left aboard, and was reading that, when suddenly he started to his feet with an exclamation of amaze, and, when the captain turned to see what was the matter, Waring was ghastly pale and fearfully excited by something he had read. He hid the paper under his coat and sprang up on deck and paced nervously to and fro for hours, and began to grow so ill, apparently, that Captain Baird was much worried. At night he begged to be put ashore at the barracks instead of going on up to town, and Baird had become so troubled about him that he sent his second officer in the gig with him, landed him on the levee opposite the sally-port, and there, thanking them heartily, but declining further assistance, Waring had hurried through the entrance into the barrack square. Mr. Royce, the second officer, said there was considerable excitement, beating of drums and sounding of bugles, at the post, as they rowed towards the shore. He did not learn the cause. Captain Baird was most anxious to learn if the gentleman had safely reached his destination. Cram replied that he had, but in a state bordering on delirium and unable to give any coherent account of himself. He could tell he had been aboard the Ambassador and the Tampa, but that was about all.

And then they told Baird that what Waring probably saw was Wednesday's paper with the details of the inquest on the body of Lascelles and the chain of evidence pointing to himself as the murderer. This caused honest Captain Baird to lay ten to one he wasn't, and five to one he'd never heard of it till he got the paper above Pilot Town. Whereupon all three officers clapped the Briton on the back and shook him by the hand and begged his company to dinner at the barracks and at Moreau's; and then, while Reynolds sped to the police-office and Kinsey back to Colonel Braxton, whom he represented at the interview, Cram remounted, and, followed by the faithful Jeffers, trotted up Rampart Street and sent in his card to Madame Lascelles, and Madame's maid brought back reply that she was still too shocked and stricken to receive visitors. So also did Madame d'Hervilly deny herself, and Cram rode home to Nell.

"It is useless," he said. "She will not see me."

"Then she shall see me," said Mrs. Cram.

And so a second time did Jeffers make the trip to town that day, this time perched with folded arms in the rumble of the pony-phaeton.

And while she was gone, the junior doctor was having the liveliest experience of his few years of service. Scorched and burned though she was, Mrs. Doyle's faculties seemed to have returned with renewed

acuteness and force. She demanded to be taken to her husband's side, but the doctor sternly refused. She demanded to be told his condition, and was informed that it was so critical he must not be disturbed, especially by her, who was practically responsible for all his trouble. Then she insisted on knowing whether he was conscious and whether he had asked for a priest, and when informed that Father Foley had already arrived, it required the strength of four men to hold her. She raved like a maniac, and her screams appalled the garrison. But screams and struggles were all in vain. "Pills the Less" sent for his senior, and "Pills the Pitiless" more than ever deserved his name. He sent for a strait-jacket, saw her securely stowed away in that and borne over to a vacant room in the old hospital, set the steward's wife on watch and a sentry at the door, went back to Waring's bedside, where Sam lay tossing in burning fever, murmured his few words of caution to Pierce and Ferry, then hastened back to where poor Doyle was gasping in agony of mind and body, clinging to the hand of the gentle soldier of the cross, gazing piteously into his father confessor's eyes, drinking in his words of exhortation, yet unable to make articulate reply. The flames had done their cruel work. Only in desperate pain could he speak again.

It was nearly dark when Mrs. Cram came driving back to barracks, bringing Mr. Reynolds with her. Her eyes were dilated, her cheeks flushed with excitement, as she sprang from the low phaeton, and, with a murmured "Come to me as soon as you can" to her husband, she sped away up the stairs, leaving him to receive and entertain her passenger.

"I, too, went to see Madame Lascelles late this afternoon," said Reynolds. "I wished to show her this."

It was a copy of a despatch to the chief of police of New Orleans. It stated in effect that Philippe Lascelles had not been seen or heard of around Key West for over two weeks. It was believed that he had gone to Havana.

"Can you get word of this to our friend the detective?" asked Cram.

"I have wired already. He has gone to Georgia. What I hoped to do was to note the effect of this on Madame Lascelles; but she was too ill to see me. Luckily, Mrs. Cram was there, and I sent it up to her. She will tell you. Now I have to see Braxton."

And then came a messenger to ask Cram to join the doctor at Doyle's quarters at once: so he scurried up-stairs to see Nell first and learn her tidings.

"Did I not tell you?" she exclaimed, as he entered the parlor. "Philippe Lascelles was here that very night, and had been seen with his brother at the office on Royal Street twice before this thing happened, and they had trouble about money. Oh, I made her understand. I appealed to her as a woman to do what she could to right Mr. Waring, who was so generally believed to be the guilty man. I told her we had detectives tracing Philippe and would soon find how and when he reached New Orleans. Finally I showed her the despatch that Mr. Reynolds sent up, and at last she broke down, burst into tears, and said

she, too, had learned since the inquest that Philippe was with her husband, and probably was the stranger referred to, that awful night. She even suspected it at the time, for she knew he came not to borrow but to demand money that was rightfully his, and also certain papers that Armand held and that now were gone. It was she who told me of Philippe's having been seen with Armand at the office, but she declared she could not believe that he would kill her husband. I pointed out the fact that Armand had fired two shots from his pistol, apparently, and that no bullet-marks had been found in the room where the quarrel took place, and that if his shots had taken effect on his antagonist he simply could not have been Waring, for though Waring had been bruised and beaten about the head, the doctor said there was no sign of bullet-mark about him anywhere. She recognized the truth of this, but still she said she believed that there was a quarrel or was to be a quarrel between her husband and Mr. Waring. Otherwise I believe her throughout. I believe that, no matter what romance there was about her nursing Philippe and his falling in love with her, she did not encourage him, did not call him here again, was true to her old husband. She is simply possessed with the idea that the quarrel which killed her husband was between himself and Mr. Waring, and that it occurred after Philippe had got his money and papers, and gone."

"W-e-e-ll, Philippe will have a heap to explain when he is found," was Cram's reply. "Now I have to go to Doyle's. He is making some confession, I expect, to the priest."

But Cram never dreamed for an instant what that was to be.

That night poor Doyle's spirit took its flight, and the story of misery he had to tell, partly by scrawling with a pencil, partly by gesture in reply to question, partly in painfully-gasped sentences, a few words at a time, was practically this. Lascelles and his party did indeed leave him at the Pelican when he was so drunk he only vaguely knew what was going on or what had happened in the bar-room where they were drinking, but his wife had told him the whole story. Lascelles wanted more drink,—champagne; the bar-tender wanted to close up. They bought several bottles, however, and had them put in the cab, and Lascelles was gay and singing, and, instead of going directly home, insisted on stopping to make a call on the lady who occupied the upper floor of the house Doyle rented on the levee. Doyle rarely saw her, but she sometimes wrote to Lascelles and got Bridget to take the letters to him. She was setting her cap for the old Frenchman. "We called her Mrs. Dawson." The cabman drove very slowly through the storm as Doyle walked home along with Bridget and some man who was helping, and when they reached the gate there was the cab and Waring in it. The cab-driver was standing by his horse, swearing at the delay and saying he would charge double fare. Doyle had had trouble with his wife for many years, and renewed trouble lately because of two visits Lascelles had paid there, and that evening when she sent for him he was drinking in Waring's room, had been drinking during the day; he dreaded more trouble, and 'twas he who took Waring's knife, and still had it, he said, when he entered

the gate, and no sooner did he see Lascelles at his door than he ordered him to leave. Lascelles refused to go. Doyle knocked him down, and the Frenchman sprang up, swearing vengeance. Lascelles fired two shots, and Doyle struck once,—with the knife,—and there lay Lascelles, dead, before Doyle could know or realize what he was doing. In fact, Doyle never did know. It was what his wife had told him, and life had been a hell to him ever since that woman came back. She had blackmailed him, more or less, ever since he got his commission, because of an old trouble he'd had in Texas.

And this confession was written out for him, signed by Doyle on his dying bed, duly witnessed, and the civil authorities were promptly notified. Bridget Doyle was handed over to the police. Certain detectives out somewhere on the trail of somebody else were telegraphed to come in, and four days later, when the force of the fever was broken and Waring lay weak, languid, but returning to his senses, Cram and the doctor read the confession to their patient, and then started to their feet as he almost sprang from the bed.

"It's an infernal lie!" he weakly cried. "I took that knife from Doyle and kept it. I myself saw Lascelles to his gate, safe and sound."

XI.

The sunshine of an exquisite April morning was shimmering over the Louisiana lowlands as Battery "X" was "hitching in," and Mrs. Cram's pretty pony-phaeton came flashing through the garrison gate and reined up in front of the guns. A proud and happy woman was Mrs. Cram, and daintily she gathered the spotless, cream-colored reins and slanted her long English driving-whip at the exact angle prescribed by the vogue of the day. By her side, reclining luxuriously on his pillows, was Sam Waring, now senior first lieutenant of the battery, taking his first airing since his strange illness. Pallid and thin though he was, that young gentleman was evidently capable of appreciating to the fullest extent the devoted attentions of which he had been the object ever since his return. Stanch friend and fervent champion of her husband's most distinguished officer at any time, Mrs. Cram had thrown herself into his cause with a zeal that challenged the admiration even of the men whom she mercilessly snubbed because they had accepted the general verdict that Lascelles had died by Waring's hand. Had they met in the duello as practised in the South in those days, sword to sword, or armed with pistol at twelve paces, she would have shuddered, but maintained that as a soldier and gentleman Waring could not have refused his opponent's challenge, inexcusable though such challenge might have been. But that he could have stooped to vulgar, unregulated fracas, without seconds or the formality of the cartel, first with fists and those women's weapons, nails, then knives or stilettoes, as though he were some low dago or Sicilian,—why, that was simply and utterly incredible. None the less she was relieved and rejoiced, as were all Waring's friends, when the full purport of poor Doyle's dying confession was noised abroad. Even

those who were sceptical were now silenced. For four days her comfort and relief had been inexpressible; and then came the hour when, with woe and trouble in his face, her husband returned to her from Waring's bedside with the incomprehensible tidings that he had utterly repudiated Doyle's confession,—had, indeed, said that which could probably only serve to renew the suspicion of his own guilt, or else justify the theory that he was demented.

Though Cram and the doctor warned Waring not to talk, talk he would, to Pierce, to Ferry, to Ananias; and though these three were pledged by Cram to reveal to no one what Waring said, it plunged them in an agony of doubt and misgiving. Day after day had the patient told and re-told the story, and never could cross-questioning shake him in the least. Cram sent for Reynolds and took him into their confidence, and Reynolds heard the story and added his questions, but to no effect. From first to last he remembered every incident up to his parting with Lascelles at his own gateway. After that—nothing.

His story, in brief, was as follows. He was both surprised and concerned, while smoking and chatting with Mr. Allerton in the rotunda of the St. Charles, to see Lascelles with a friend, evidently watching an opportunity of speaking with him. He had noticed about a week previous a marked difference in the old Frenchman's manner, and three days before the tragedy, when calling on his way from town to see Madame and Nin Nin, was informed that they were not at home, and Monsieur himself was the informant; nor did he, as heretofore, invite Waring to enter. Sam was a fellow who detested misunderstanding. Courteously, but positively, he demanded explanation. Lascelles shrugged his shoulders, but gave it. He had heard too much of Monsieur's attentions to Madame his wife, and desired their immediate discontinuance. He must request Monsieur's assurance that he would not again visit Beau Rivage, or else the reparation due a man of honor, etc. "Whereupon," said Waring, "I didn't propose to be outdone in civility, and therefore replied, in the best French I could command, 'Permit me to tender Monsieur—both. Monsieur's friends will find me at the barracks.'"

"All the same," said Waring, "when I found Madame and Nin Nin stuck in the mud I did what I considered the proper thing, and drove them, *coram publico*, to 'bonne maman's,' never letting them see, of course, that there was any row on tap, and so when I saw the old fellow with a keen-looking party alongside I felt sure it meant mischief. I was utterly surprised, therefore, when Lascelles came up with hat off and hand extended, bowing low, praying pardon for the intrusion, but saying he could not defer another instant the desire to express his gratitude the most profound for my extreme courtesy to Madame and his beloved child. He had heard the whole story, and, to my confusion, insisted on going over all the details before Allerton, even to my heroism, as he called it, in knocking down that big bully of a cabman. I was confused, yet couldn't shake him off. He was persistent. He was abject. He begged to meet my friend, to present his, to open champagne and drink eternal friendship. He would

change the name of his *château*—the rotten old rookery—from Beau Rivage to Belle Alliance. He would make this day a *fête* in the calendar of the Lascelles family. And then it began to dawn on me that he had been drinking champagne before he came. I did not catch the name of the other gentleman, a much younger man. He was very ceremonious and polite, but distant. Then, in some way, came up the fact that I had been trying to get a cab to take me back to barracks, and then Lascelles declared that nothing could be more opportune. He had secured a carriage and was just going down with Monsieur. They had *des affaires* to transact at once. He took me aside and said, 'In proof that you accept my *amende*, and in order that I may make to you my personal apologies, you must accept my invitation.' So go with them I did. I was all the time thinking of Cram's mysterious note bidding me return at taps. I couldn't imagine what was up, but I made my best endeavors to get a cab. None was to be had, so I was really thankful for this opportunity. All the way down Lascelles overwhelmed me with civilities, and I could only murmur and protest, and the other party only murmured approbation. He hardly spoke English at all. Then Lascelles insisted on a stop at the Pelican and on bumpers of champagne, and there, as luck would have it, was Doyle,—drunk, as usual, and determined to join the party; and though I endeavored to put him aside, Lascelles would not have it. He insisted on being presented to the comrade of his gallant friend, and in the private room where we went he overwhelmed Doyle with details of our grand reconciliation and with bumper after bumper of Krug. This enabled me to fight shy of the wine, but in ten minutes Doyle was fighting drunk, Lascelles tipsy. The driver came in for his pay, saying he would go no further. They had a row. Lascelles wouldn't pay; called him an Irish thief, and all that. I slipped my last V into the driver's hand and got him out somehow. Monsieur Philippes, or whatever his name was, said he would go out,—he'd get a cab in the neighborhood; and the next thing I knew, Lascelles and Doyle were in a fury of a row. Lascelles said all the Irish were knaves and blackguards and swindlers, and Doyle stumbled around after him. Out came a pistol! Out came a knife! I tripped Doyle and got him into a chair, and was so intent on pacifying him and telling him not to make a fool of himself that I didn't notice anything else. I handled him good-naturedly, got the knife away, and then was amazed to find that he had my own pet paper-cutter. I made them shake hands and make up. It was all a mistake, said Lascelles. But what made it a worse mistake, the old man *would* order more wine, and, with it, brandy. He insisted on celebrating this second grand reconciliation, and then both got drunker, but the tall Frenchman had Lascelles's pistol and I had the knife, and then a cab came, and, though it was storming beastly and I had Ferry's duds on and Larkin's best tile and Pierce's umbrella, we bundled in somehow and drove on down the levee, leaving Doyle in the hands of that Amazon of a wife of his and a couple of doughboys who happened to be around there. Now Lascelles was all hilarity, singing, joking, confidential. Nothing would do but we must stop and call on a lovely woman, a *belle amie.* He

could rely on our discretion, he said, laying his finger on his nose, and looking sly and coquettish, for all the world like some old *roué* of a Frenchman. He must stop and see her and take her some wine. 'Indeed,' he said, mysteriously, 'it is a rendezvous.' Well, I was their guest; I had no money. What could I do? It was then after eleven, I should judge. Monsieur Philippes, or whatever his name was, gave orders to the driver. We pulled up, and then, to my surprise, I found we were at Doyle's. That ended it. I told them they must excuse me. They protested, but of course I couldn't go in there. So they took a couple of bottles apiece and went in the gate, and I settled myself for a nap and got it. I don't know how long I slept, but I was aroused by the devil's own tumult. A shot had been fired. Men and women both were screaming and swearing. Some one suddenly burst into the cab beside me, really pushed from behind, and then away we went through the mud and the rain; and the lightning was flashing now, and presently I could recognize Lascelles, raging. 'Infâme!' 'Coquin!' 'Assassin!' were the mildest terms he was volleying at somebody; and then, recognizing me, he burst into maudlin tears, swore I was his only friend. He had been insulted, abused, denied reparation. Was he hurt? I inquired, and instinctively felt for my knife. It was still there where I'd hid it in the inside pocket of my overcoat. No hurt; not a blow. Did I suppose that he, a Frenchman, would pardon that or leave the spot until satisfaction had been exacted? Then I begged him to be calm and listen to me for a moment. I told him my plight,—that I had given my word to be at barracks that evening; that I had no money left, but I could go no further. Instantly he forgot his woes and became absorbed in my affairs. '*Parole d'honneur!*' he would see that mine was never unsullied. He himself would escort me to the *maison de* Capitaine Cram. He would rejoice to say to that brave ennemi, Behold! here is thy lieutenant, of honor the most unsullied, of courage the most admirable, of heart the most magnanimous. The Lord only knows what he wouldn't have done had we not pulled up at his gate. There I helped him out on the banquette. He was steadied by his row, whatever it had been. He would not let me expose myself—even under Pierce's umbrella. He would not permit me to suffer 'from times so of the dog.' 'You will drive Monsieur to his home and return here for me at once,' he ordered cabby, grasped both my hands with fervent goodnight and the explanation that he had much haste, implored pardon for leaving me,—on the morrow he would call and explain everything,—then darted into the gate. We never could have parted on more friendly terms. I stood a moment to see that he safely reached his door, for a light was dimly burning in the hall, then turned to jump into the cab, but it wasn't there. Nothing was there. I jumped from the banquette into a berth aboard some steamer out at sea. They tell me the first thing I asked for was Pierce's umbrella and Larkin's hat."

And this was the story that Waring maintained from first to last. "Pills" ventured a query as to whether the amount of Krug and Clicquot consumed might not have overthrown his mental equipoise. No, Sam declared, he drank very little. "The only bacchanalian thing I did

was to join in a jovial chorus from a new French opera which Lascelles's friend piped up and I had heard in the North:

> Oui, buvons, buvons encore!
> S'il est un vin qu'on adore
> De Paris à Macao,
> C'est le Clicquot, c'est le Clicquot."

Asked if he had formed any conjecture as to the identity of the stranger, Sam said no. The name sounded like "Philippes," but he couldn't be sure. But when told that there were rumors to the effect that Lascelles's younger brother had been seen with him twice or thrice of late, and that he had been in exile because, if anything, of a hopeless passion for Madame his sister-in-law, and that his name was Philippe, Waring looked dazed. Then a sudden light, as of newer, fresher memory, flashed up in his eyes. He seemed about to speak, but as suddenly controlled himself and turned his face to the wall. From that time on he was determinedly dumb about the stranger. What roused him to lively interest and conjecture, however, was Cram's query as to whether he had not recognized in the cabman, called in by the stranger, the very one whom he had "knocked endwise" and who had tried to shoot him that morning. "No," said Waring: "the man did not speak at all, that I noticed, and I did not once see his face, he was so bundled up against the storm." But if it was the same party, suggested he, it seemed hardly necessary to look any further in explanation of his own disappearance. Cabby had simply squared matters by knocking him senseless, helping himself to his watch and ring, and turning out his pockets, then hammering him until frightened off, and then, to cover his tracks, setting him afloat in Anatole's boat.

"Perhaps cabby took a hand in the murder, too," suggested Sam, with eager interest. "You say he had disappeared,—gone with his plunder. Now, who else could have taken my knife?"

Then Reynolds had something to tell him: that the "lady" who wrote the anonymous letters, the *belle amie* whom Lascelles proposed to visit, the occupant of the upper floor of "the dove-cot," was none other than the blighted floweret who had appealed to him for aid and sympathy, for fifty dollars at first and later for more, the first year of his army service in the South, "for the sake of the old home." Then Waring grew even more excited and interested. "Pills" put a stop to further developments for a few days. He feared a relapse. But, in spite of "Pills," the developments, like other maladies, throve. The little detective came down again. He was oddly inquisitive about that *chanson à boire* from "*Fleur de Thé.*" Would Mr. Waring hum it for him? And Sam, now sitting up in his parlor, turned to his piano, and with long, slender, fragile-looking fingers rattled a lively prelude and then faintly quavered the rollicking words.

"Odd," said Mr. Pepper, as they had grown to call him, "I heard that sung by a fellow up in Chartres Street two nights hand-running before this thing happened,—a merry cuss, too, with a rather loose hand on his shekels. Lots of people may know it, though, mayn't they?"

"No, indeed, not down here," said Sam. "It only came out in

New York within the last four months, and hasn't been South or West at all, that I know of. What did he look like?"

"Well, what did the feller that was with you look like?"

But here Sam's description grew vague. So Pepper went up to have a beer by himself at the *café chantant* on Chartres Street, and didn't return for nearly a week.

Meantime came this exquisite April morning and Sam's appearance in the pony-phaeton in front of Battery "X." Even the horses seemed to prick up their ears and be glad to see him. Grim old war sergeants rode up to touch their caps and express the hope that they'd soon have the lieutenant in command of the right section again,—"not but what Loot'n't Ferry's doing first-rate, sir,"—and for a few minutes, as his fair charioteer drove him around the battery, in his weak, languid voice, Waring indulged in a little of his own characteristic chaffing:

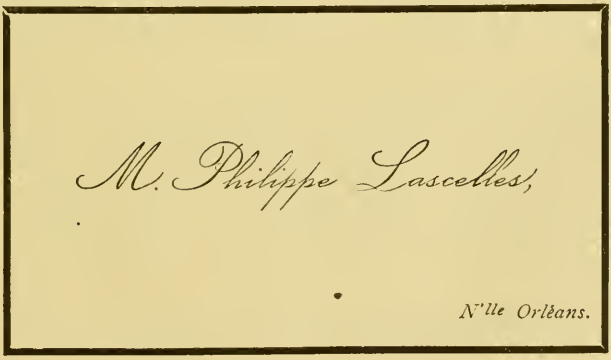
"I expect you to bring this section up to top notch, Mr. Ferry, as I am constitutionally opposed to any work on my own account. I beg to call your attention, sir, to the fact that it's very bad form to appear with full-dress *schabraque* on your horse when the battery is in fatigue. The red blanket, sir, the red blanket only should be used. Be good enough to stretch your traces there, right caisson. Yes, I thought so, swing trace is twisted. Carelessness, Mr. Ferry, and indifference to duty are things I won't tolerate. Your cheek-strap, too, sir, is an inch too long. Your bit will fall through that horse's mouth. This won't do, sir, not in my section, sir. I'll fine you a box of Partagas if it occurs again."

But the blare of the bugle sounding "attention" announced the presence of the battery commander. Nell whipped up in an instant and whisked her invalid out of the way.

"Good-morning, Captain Cram," said he, as he passed his smiling chief. "I regret to observe, sir, that things have been allowed to run down somewhat in my absence."

"Oh, out with you, you combination of cheek and incapacity, or I'll run you down with the whole battery. Oh! Waring, some gentlemen in a carriage have just stopped at your quarters, all in black, too. Ah, here's the orderly now."

And the card, black-bordered, handed into the phaeton, bore a name which blanched Waring's face:



"Why, what is it, Waring?" asked Cram, anxiously, bending down from his saddle.

For a moment Waring was silent. Mrs. Cram felt her own hand trembling.

"Can you turn the battery over to Ferry and come with me?" asked the lieutenant.

"Certainly.—Bugler, report to Lieutenant Ferry and tell him I shall have to be absent for a while.—Drive on, Nell."

When, five minutes later, Waring was assisted up the stair-way, Cram towering on his right, the little party came upon a group of strangers,—three gentlemen, one of whom stepped courteously forward, raising his hat in a black-gloved hand. He was of medium height, slender, erect, and soldierly in bearing; his face was dark and oval, his eyes large, deep, and full of light. He spoke mainly in English, but with marked accent, and the voice was soft and melodious.

"I fear I have intrude. Have I the honor to address Lieutenant Waring? I am Philippe Lascelles."

For a moment Waring was too amazed to speak. At last, with brightening face and holding forth his hand, he said,—

"I am most glad to meet you,—to know that it was not you who drove down with us that night."

"Alas, no! I left Armand but that very morning, returning to Havana, thence going to Santiago. It was not until five days ago the news reached me. It is of that stranger I come to ask."

It was an odd council gathered there in Waring's room in the old barracks that April morning while Ferry was drilling the battery to his heart's content and the infantry companies were wearily going over the manual or bayonet exercise. Old Brax had been sent for, and came. Monsieur Lascelles's friends, both, like himself, soldiers of the South, were presented, and for their information Waring's story was again told, with only most delicate allusion to certain incidents which might be considered as reflecting on the character and dignity of the elder brother. And then Philippe told his. True, there had been certain transactions between Armand and himself. He had fully trusted his brother, a man of affairs, with the management of the little inheritance which he, a soldier, had no idea how to handle, and Armand's business had suffered greatly by the war. It was touching to see how in every word the younger strove to conceal the fact that the elder had misapplied the securities and had been practically faithless to his trust. Everything, he declared, had been finally settled as between them that very morning before his return to Havana. Armand had brought to him early all papers remaining in his possession and had paid him what was justly due. He knew, however, that Armand was now greatly embarrassed in his affairs. They had parted with fond embrace, the most affectionate of brothers. But Philippe had been seeing and hearing enough to make him gravely apprehensive as to Armand's future, to know that his business was rapidly going down-hill, that he had been raising money in various ways, speculating, and had fallen into the hands of sharpers, and yet Armand would not admit it, would not consent to accept help or to use his younger brother's property in any

way. "The lawyer," said Philippe, "informed me that Beau Rivage was heavily mortgaged, and it is feared that there will be nothing left for Madame and Nin Nin, though, for that matter, they shall never want." What he had also urged, and he spoke with reluctance here, and owned it only because the detectives told him it was now well known, was that Armand had of late been playing the *rôle* of *galant homme*, and that the woman in the case had fled. Of all this he felt, he said, bound to speak fully, because in coming here with his witnesses to meet Lieutenant Waring and his friends he had two objects in view. The first was to admit that he had accepted as fact the published reports that Lieutenant Waring was probably his brother's slayer; had hastened back to New Orleans to demand justice or obtain revenge; had here learned from the lawyers and police that there were now other and much more probable theories, having heard only one of which he had cried "Enough," and had come to pray the forgiveness of Mr. Waring for having believed an officer and a gentleman guilty of so foul a crime. Second, he had come to invoke his aid in running down the murderer. Philippe was affected almost to tears.

"There is one question I must beg to ask Monsieur," said Waring, as the two clasped hands. "Is there not still a member of your family who entertains the idea that it was I who killed Armand Lascelles?"

And Philippe was deeply embarrassed.

"Ah, monsieur," he answered, "I could not venture to intrude myself upon a grief so sacred. I have not seen Madame, and who is there who could—who would—tell her of Armand's——" And Philippe broke off abruptly, with despairing shrug, and outward wave of his slender hand.

"Let us try to see that she never does know," said Waring. "These are the men we need to find: the driver of the cab, the stranger whose name sounded so like yours, a tall, swarthy, black-haired, black-eyed fellow with pointed moustache——"

"*C'est lui! c'est bien lui!*" exclaimed Lascelles,—"the very man who insisted on entering the private office where, Armand and I, we close our affairs that morning. His whispered words make my brother all of pale, and yet he go off humming to himself."

"Oh, we'll nail him," said Cram. "Two of the best detectives in the South are on his trail now."

And then came Ananias with a silver tray, champagne, and glasses (from Mrs. Cram), and the conference went on another hour before the guests went off.

"Bless my soul!" said Brax, whose diameter seemed in no wise increased by the quart of Roederer he had swallowed with such gusto,—"bless my soul! and to think I believed that we were going to have a duel with some of those fellows a fortnight or so ago!"

Then entered "Pills" and ordered Waring back to bed. He was sleeping placidly when, late that evening, Reynolds and Cram came tearing up the stair-way, full of great news; but the doctor said not to wake him.

Meantime, how fared it with that bruised reed, the lone widow of the late Lieutenant Doyle? Poor old Jim had been laid away with

military honors under the flag at Chalmette, and his faithful Bridget was spending the days in the public calaboose. Drunk and disorderly was the charge on which she had been arraigned, and, though she declared herself abundantly able to pay her fine twice over, Mr. Pepper had warned the authorities to keep her under lock and key and out of liquor, as her testimony would be of vital importance, if for nothing better than to send her up for perjury. Now she was alternately wheedling, cursing, coaxing, bribing; all to no purpose. The agent of the Lemaître property had swooped down on the dove-cot and found a beggarly array of empty bottles and a good deal of discarded feminine gear scattered about on both floors. One room in which certain detectives were vastly interested contained the unsavory relics of a late supper. Three or four empty champagne-bottles, some shattered glasses, and, what seemed most to attract them, various stubs of partially-consumed cigarettes, lay about the tables and floor. Adjoining this was the chamber which had been known as Mrs. Dawson's, and this, too, had been thoroughly explored. 'Louette, who had disappeared after Doyle's tragic death, was found not far away, and the police thought it but fair that Mrs. Doyle should not be deprived of the services of her maid. Then came other additions, though confined in other sections of the city. Mr. Pepper wired that the party known as Monsieur Philippes had been run to earth and would reach town with him by train about the same time that another of the force returned from Mobile by boat, bringing a young man known as Dawson and wanted as a deserter, and a very sprightly young lady who appeared to move in a higher sphere of life, but was unquestionably his wife, for the officer could prove their marriage in South Carolina in the spring of '65. As Mr. Pepper expressed it when he reported to Reynolds, "It's almost a full hand, but, for a fact, it's only a bobtail flush. We need that cabman to fill."

"How did you trace Philippes?" asked Reynolds.

"Him? Oh, he was too darned musical. It was—what do you call it?—Flure de Tay that did for him. Why, he's the fellow that raised all the money and most of the h—ll for this old man Lascelles. He'd been sharping him for years."

"Well, when can we bring this thing to a head?" asked the aide-de-camp.

"*Poco tiempo!* by Saturday, I reckon."

But it came sooner.

Waring was seated one lovely evening in a low reclining chair on Mrs. Cram's broad gallery, sipping contentedly at the fragrant tea she had handed him. The band was playing, and a number of children were chasing about in noisy glee. The men were at supper, the officers, as a rule, at mess. For several minutes the semi-restored invalid had not spoken a word. In one of his customary day-dreams he had been calmly gazing at the shapely white hand of his hostess, "all queenly with its weight of rings."

"Will you permit me to examine those rings a moment?" he said.

"Why, certainly. No, you sit still, Mr. Waring," she replied,

promptly rising, and, pulling them off her fingers, dropped them into his open palm. With the same dreamy expression on his clear-cut, pallid face, he turned them over and over, held them up to the light, finally selected one exquisite gem, and then, half rising, held forth the others. As she took them and still stood beside his chair as though patiently waiting, he glanced up.

"Oh, beg pardon. You want this, I suppose?" and, handing her the dainty teacup, calmly slipped the ring into his waistcoat-pocket and languidly murmured, "Thanks."

"Well, I like that."

"Yes? So do I, rather better than the others."

"May I ask what you purpose doing with my ring?"

"I was just thinking. I've ordered a new Amidon for Larkin, a new ninety-dollar suit for Ferry, and I shall be decidedly poor this month, even if we recover Merton's watch."

"Oh, well, if it's only to pawn one, why not take a diamond?"

"But it isn't."

"What then, pray?"

"Well, again I was just thinking—whether I could find another to match this up in town, or send this one—to her."

"Mr. *Waring! Really?*" And now Mrs. Cram's bright eyes are dancing with eagerness and delight.

For all answer, though his own eyes begin to moisten and swim, he draws from an inner pocket a dainty letter, post-marked from a far, far city to the northeast.

"You *dear* fellow! How can I tell you how glad I am! I haven't dared to ask you of her since we met at Washington, but—oh, my heart has been just full of her since—since this trouble came."

"God bless the trouble! it was that that won her to me at last. I have loved her ever since I first saw her—long years ago."

"Oh! *oh!* OH! if Ned were only here! I'm wild to tell him. I may, mayn't I?"

"Yes, the moment he comes."

But Ned brought a crowd with him when he got back from town a little later. Reynolds was there, and Philippe Lascelles, and Mr. Pepper, and they had a tale to tell that must needs be condensed.

They had all been present by invitation of the civil authorities at a very dramatic affair during the late afternoon,—the final lifting of the veil that hid from public view the "strange, eventful history" of the Lascelles tragedy. Cram was the spokesman by common consent. "With the exception of the Dawsons," said he, "none of the parties implicated knew up to the hour of his or her examination that any one of the others was to appear." Mrs. Dawson, eager to save her own pretty neck, had told her story without reservation. Dawson knew nothing.

The story had been wrung from her piecemeal, but was finally told in full, and in the presence of the officers and civilians indicated. She had married in April, '65, to the scorn of her people, a young Yankee officer attached to the commissary department. She had starved all through the war. She longed for life, luxury, comforts. She had

nothing but her beauty, he nothing but his pay. The extravagances of a month swamped him; the drink and desperation of the next ruined him. He maintained her in luxury at the best hotel only a few weeks, then all of his own and much of Uncle Sam's money was gone. Inspection proved him a thief and embezzler. He fled, and she was abandoned to her own resources. She had none but her beauty and a gift of penmanship which covered the many sins of her orthography. She was given a clerkship, but wanted more money, and took it, blackmailing a quartermaster. She imposed on Waring, but he quickly found her out and absolutely refused afterwards to see her at all. She was piqued and angered, "a woman scorned," but not until he joined Battery "X" did opportunity present itself for revenge. She had secured a room under Mrs. Doyle's reputable roof, to be near the barracks, where she could support herself by writing for Mrs. Doyle and blackmailing those whom she lured, and where she could watch *him*, and, to her eager delight, she noted and prepared to make much of his attentions to Madame Lascelles. Incidentally, too, she might inveigle the susceptible Lascelles himself, on the principle that there's no fool like an old fool. Mrs. Doyle lent herself eagerly to the scheme. The letters began to pass to and fro again. Lascelles was fool enough to answer, and when, all on a sudden, Mrs. Doyle's "long-missing relative," as she called him, turned up, a pensioner on her charity, it was through the united efforts of the two women he got a situation as cab-driver at the stable up at the eastern skirt of the town. Dawson had enlisted to keep from starving, and, though she had no use for him as a husband, he would do to fetch and carry, and he dare not disobey. Twice when Doyle was battery officer of the day did this strangely-assorted pair of women entertain Lascelles at supper and fleece him out of what money he had. Then came Philippes with Lascelles in Mike's cab, as luck would have it, but they could not fleece Philippes. Old Lascelles was rapidly succumbing to Nita's fascinations when came the night of the terrible storm. Mike had got to drinking, and was laid low by the lieutenant. Mike and Bridget both vowed vengeance. But meantime Doyle himself had got wind of something that was going on, and he and his tyrant had a fearful row. He commanded her never to allow a man inside the premises when he was away, and, though brought home drunk that awful night, furiously ordered the Frenchman out, and might have assaulted them had not Bridget lassoed him with a chloroformed towel. That was the last he knew until another day. Lascelles, Philippes, and she, Mrs. Dawson, had already drunk a bottle of champagne when interrupted by Doyle's coming. Lascelles was tipsy, had snatched his pistol and fired a shot to frighten Doyle, but had only enraged him, and then he had to run for his cab. He was bundled in and Doyle disposed of. It was only three blocks down to Beau Rivage, and thither Mike drove them in all the storm. She did not know at the time of Waring's being in the cab. In less than fifteen minutes Mike was back and called excitedly for Bridget; had a hurried consultation with her; she seized a waterproof and ran out with him, but darted back and took the bottle of chloroform she had used on her husband,

now lying limp and senseless on a sofa below, and then she disappeared. When half an hour passed and Lascelles failed to return with them, bringing certain papers of which he'd been speaking to Philippes, the latter declared there must be something wrong, and went out to reconnoitre despite the storm. He could see nothing. It was after midnight when Mrs. Doyle came rushing in, gasping, all out of breath "along of the storm," she said. She had been down the levee with Mike to find a cushion and lap-robe he dropped and couldn't afford to lose. They never could have found it at all "but for ould Lascelles lending them a lantern." He wanted Mike to bring down two bottles of champagne he'd left here, but it was storming so that he would not venture again, and Lieutenant Waring, she said, was going to spend the night with Lascelles at Beau Rivage: Mike couldn't drive any further down towards the barracks. Lascelles sent word to Philippes that he'd bring up the papers first thing in the morning, if the storm lulled, and Philippes went out indignant at all the time lost, but Mike swore he'd not drive down again for a fortune. So the Frenchman got into the cab and went up with him to town. The moment he was gone Mrs. Doyle declared she was dead tired, used up, and drank huge goblets of the wine until she reeled off to her room, leaving an apron behind. Then Mrs. Dawson went to her own room, after putting out the lights, and when, two days later, she heard the awful news of the murder, knowing that investigation would follow and she and her sins be brought to light, she fled, for she had enough of his money in her possession, and poor demented Dawson, finding her gone, followed.

Philippes's story corroborated this in every particular. The last he saw of the cab or of the cabman was near the house of the hook-and-ladder company east of the French Market. The driver there said his horse was dead beat and could do no more, so Philippes went into the market, succeeded in getting another cab by paying a big price, slept at Cassidy's, waited all the morning about Lascelles's place, and finally, having to return to the Northeast at once, he took the evening train on the Jackson road and never heard of the murder until ten days after. He was amazed at his arrest.

And then came before his examiners a mere physical wreck,—the shadow of his former self,—caught at the high tide of a career of crime and debauchery, a much less bulky party than the truculent Jehu of Madame Lascelles's cab, yet no less important a witness than that same driver. He was accompanied by a priest. He had been brought hither in an ambulance from the Hôtel-Dieu, where he had been traced several days before and found almost at death's door. His confession was most important of all. He had struck Lieutenant Waring as that officer turned away from Lascelles's gate, intending only to down and then kick and hammer him, but he had struck with a lead-loaded rubber club, and he was horrified to see him drop like one dead. Then he lost his nerve and drove furiously back for Bridget. Together they returned, and found Waring lying there as he had left him on the dripping banquette. "You've killed him, Mike. There's only one thing to do," she said; "take his watch and everything valuable he has, and we'll throw him over on the levee."

She herself took the knife from his overcoat-pocket, lest he should recover suddenly, and then, said the driver, "even as we were bending over him there came a sudden flash of lightning, and there was Lascelles bending over us, demanding to know what it meant. Then like another flash he seemed to realize what was up, sprang back, and drew pistol. He had caught us in the act. There was nothing else to do; we both sprang upon him. He fired, and hit me, but only in the arm, and before he could pull trigger again we both grappled him. I seized his gun, Bridget his throat, but he screamed and fought like a tiger, then wilted all of a sudden. I was scared and helpless, but she had her wits about her, and told me what to do. The lieutenant began to gasp and revive just then, so she soaked the handkerchief in chloroform and placed it over his mouth, and together we lifted him into the cab. Then we raised Lascelles and carried him in and laid him on his sofa, for he had left the door open and the lamp on the table. Bridget had been there before, and knew all about the house. We set the pistol back in his hand, but couldn't make the fingers grasp it. We ransacked the desk and got what money there was, locked and bolted the doors, and climbed out of the side window, under which she dropped the knife among the bushes. 'They'll never suspect us in the world, Mike,' she said. 'It's the lieutenant's knife that did it, and, as he was going to fight him anyhow, he'll get the credit of it all.' Then we drove up the levee, put Waring in Anatole's boat, sculls and all, and shoved him off. 'I'll muzzle Jim,' she said. 'I'll make him believe 'twas he that did it when he was drunk.' She took most of the money, and the watch and ring. She said she could hide them until they'd be needed. Then I drove Philippes up to town until I began to get so sick and faint I could do no more. I turned the cab loose and got away to a house where I knew they'd take care of me, and from there, when my money was gone, they sent me to the hospital, thinking I was dying. I swear to God I never meant to more than get square with the lieutenant. I never struck Lascelles at all; 'twas she who drove the knife into his heart."

Then, exhausted, he was led into an adjoining room, and Mrs. Doyle was marched in, the picture of injured Irish innocence. For ten minutes, with wonderful effrontery and nerve, she denied all personal participation in the crime, and faced her inquisitors with brazen calm. Then the chief quietly turned and signalled. An officer led forward from one side the wreck of a cabman, supported by the priest; a door opened on the other, and, escorted by another policeman, Mrs. Dawson re-entered, holding in her hands outstretched a gingham apron on which were two deep stains the shape and size of a long, straight-bladed, two-edged knife. It was the apron that Bridget Doyle had worn that fatal night. One quick, furtive look at that, one glance at her trembling, shrinking, cowering kinsman, and, with an Irish howl of despair, a loud wail of "Mike, Mike, you've sworn your sister's life away!" she threw herself upon the floor, tearing madly at her hair. And so ended the mystery of Beau Rivage.

There was silence a moment in Cram's pretty parlor when the captain had finished his story. Waring was the first to speak:

"There is one point I wish they'd clear up."

"What's that?" said Cram.

"Who's got Merton's watch?"

"Oh, by Jove! I quite forgot. It's all right, Waring. Anatole's place was 'pulled' last night, and he had her valuables all done up in a box. 'To pay for his boat,' he said."

* * * * * * * *

A quarter of a century has passed away since the scarlet plumes of Light Battery "X" were last seen dancing along the levee below New Orleans. Beau Rivage, old and moss-grown at the close of the war, fell into rapid decline after the tragedy of that April night. Heavily mortgaged, the property passed into other hands, but for years never found a tenant. Far and near the negroes spoke of the homestead as haunted, and none of their race could be induced to set foot within its gates. One night the sentry at the guard-house saw sudden light on the westward sky, and then a column of flame. Again the fire-alarm resounded among the echoing walls of the barracks; but when the soldiers reached the scene, a seething ruin was all that was left of the old Southern home. Somebody sent Cram a marked copy of a New Orleans paper, and in their cosey quarters at Fort Hamilton the captain read it aloud to his devoted Nell: "The old house has been vacant, an object of almost superstitious dread to the neighborhood," said the *Times*, "ever since the tragic death of Armand Lascelles in the spring of 1868. In police annals the affair was remarkable because of the extraordinary chain of circumstantial evidence which for a time seemed to fasten the murder upon an officer of the army then stationed at Jackson Barracks, but whose innocence was triumphantly established. Madame Lascelles, it is understood, is now educating her daughter in Paris, whither she removed immediately after her marriage a few months ago to Captain Philippe Lascelles, formerly of the Confederate army, a younger brother of her first husband."

"Well," said Cram, "I'll have to send that to Waring. They're in Vienna by this time, I suppose. Look here, Nell; how was it that when we fellows were fretting about Waring's attentions to Madame, you should have been so serenely superior to it all, even when, as I know, the stories reached you?"

"Ah, Ned, I knew a story worth two of those. He was in love with Natalie Maitland all the time."

THE END.

[JOURNALIST SERIES.]

WHEN Max O'Rell first visited this country and turned the light of his kindly optimism on our people and institutions, he was good enough to approve of some of them. It has been pleasant to notice that he found promise even in the American press, which does not usually appeal to European literary gentlemen who come to our shores in search of material. Max O'Rell paid special tribute to our reporters, and he was probably the first distinguished foreigner to look with wholly admiring eyes upon American newspaper women. He did not write of them at any length, but he lost no social opportunity of assuring them of his distinguished consideration, and of his belief in the possibilities within them. Even a verbal recognition of these possibilities, coming from such a source and at such a time, was highly gratifying to the newspaper women, whose ears were not attuned to such sweet sounds. Toleration, not commendation, was all they dared hope for, and it is very probable that Monsieur Blouet's delicate encouragement, long since forgotten by him perhaps, sustained many of them at a time when stimulating influences were badly needed.

For then, as now, women in journalism were inexperienced enough to doubt themselves. They stood at the door of the sanctums, so to speak, but their invitations to enter were not urgent. Notwithstanding many claims to the contrary, they occupy practically the same position to-day. They are more numerous, and they are further in; but their tenure of office is distinctly open to discussion. If every woman were taken out of the field the newspapers would go to press at the usual hour. That the American editor ignores this fact and maintains his attitude of quiet resignation to the existing order of things, does great credit to his manliness and sense of justice. It behooves his woman assistant to bear carefully in mind the points which he is kind enough to refrain from mentioning. In many instances she does so, for if she is not an incurable amateur she is beginning to understand what is or should be expected of her. She knows that the newspaper woman of the future must lay the foundation of her own work by training up to

SERGEANT CRŒSUS.

BY

CAPT. CHARLES KING,
U. S. ARMY,

AUTHOR OF "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," "THE DESERTER," "FROM THE RANKS," "TWO SOLDIERS," "A SOLDIER'S SECRET," "DUNRAVEN RANCH," ETC.

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MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

DECEMBER, 1893.

SERGEANT CRŒSUS.

I.

THE colonel was hopping mad. Anybody could see it, and everybody within range of his tongue and temper felt it. Bob Gray, the adjutant, guessed it before he got within sound of his voice, and could swear to it before he got out again. Being only an adjutant, however, he couldn't swear at it, and so keep on even terms with his chief. He bottled his own wrath, as he did the colonel's commentaries, and kept them both for future emergencies. A relic of the vaunted old dragoon days was the colonel; one of the fast vanishing lot of hard-riding, hard-fighting, and sometimes hard-swearing campaigners who had learned their trade under masters of the art long years before the war. He had crossed the Llano Estacado and camped on the Mimbres and chased the Navajoes when Navajoes were monarchs of the Southwestern plains, were bellicose not bucolic, raised sheol instead of sheep,—a statement otherwise expressed by Kit Carson, a keen scout and keener judge of aboriginal nature, who said that when they were not raising hell or ha'r in equal proportions the Navajoes were either dead or asleep. We were having campaigns ten times more thrilling in point of incident, ten times fiercer in point of fighting and casualties, ten times tougher in point of hardship and privation—and the food we lived on—than those of the Navajo days, to be sure, but the colonel would have it the service wasn't to be mentioned alongside that to which he had been accustomed when they scouted with Kearney or Fauntleroy and rode races with the Mounted Rifles at Albuquerque and Santa Fé. "They made cavalrymen in those days," said he. Then with gloomy reference to the losses of the summer just gone by, "Now they only kill 'em, and this set of slummers they are sending out to recruit us is only fit to be killed anyhow. Why the devil did you send me such a wooden-headed idiot for an orderly on this day of all others?" he demanded of his staff officer. "Why, he couldn't speak English!"

Now, when the colonel began to ask questions and invite explanations we all knew that he had, measurably at least, blown off his wrath; was beginning to regret anything sharp he had said; was penitent, and wanted to be mollified and forgiven and taken into good-fellowship again. Nobody knew this better than the adjutant, or presumed on it more. At this stage of the proceedings Bob became downright impudent. But his brown eyes twinkled with fun as he stood facing the colonel and waiting for an opportunity to speak.

"No, sir, he couldn't speak a word of English," repeated the colonel.

"We-ell," said Bob, reflectively, "it wasn't a civil service examination I was running. He was the cleanest man on guard, and your orders are——"

"Then send me the dirtiest so long as we are in the field," burst in the colonel, impetuously. "What I want in an orderly is just what I don't want in an adjutant,—a man who can repeat what I say, and not think."

"Well, anybody ought to be able to do that, sir," began the adjutant, with a twitch under the heavy thatch of his moustache.

"Wait till I get through, young man," interrupted the colonel again, impressively; "then you may be as harmless as you know how. What I need in an adjutant is one who can think and not say anything—except when I tell him to. Now, you sent me a Dutch doll that couldn't even squawk in English. He called me names in some foreign lingo."

"Well, you wouldn't want him to do it in English, would you, colonel?"

"Wouldn't? I didn't—Damn it! where are your wits this morning, Gray? He—he——what was it he called me, Fallon?"

"Sounded like O-burst, was all I heard, sir," said the quartermaster, uncomfortably. "But Sergeant Stein says that's only the double Dutch for colonel."

Mr. Gray's eyes were dancing now. "I never saw the man before in my life, colonel," said he. "He came with that big batch of recruits the other day. Manning's first sergeant marched him on. He looked spick-span neat and clean and intelligent,—by long odds the trimmest and most soldier-like fellow on guard."

"Not excepting the officer of the day and adjutant, I suppose," interposed the colonel.

"No exceptions whatever, sir. Indeed, not excepting any man in the whole command, from the colonel up—I mean down. You were saying yesterday that the only way to tell real cavalrymen from recruits was that we looked like jayhawkers and they like Jew-store dummies. Still, I thought the sight of a man clean shaved, with buttons and buckles polished, would please your eyes after all this campaign's mud, so I sent him. Of course if he could only call you names in Dutch I'm sorry, and will see that you're properly looked after next time."

But even "Old Tintop" began to see the fun under the sedate gravity of the adjutant's words.

"Confound you for a young rascal! What have you been making

me say, anyhow? Come back here, Fallon, and stop your laughing, too, sir. You're a nice pair to play it on your old—— What do *you* want, sir?"

Turning suddenly, he addressed a ragged, tattered, hungry-looking party in hunting-shirt, buckskin breeches, and Shoshone leggings, standing attention before the colonel's "shack,"—he had no tent,—with a bare brown hand raised to his rusty brown carbine in salute.

"I'm ordered to report to the colonel as the dirtiest man on guard, sir," was the stolid answer.

For a moment the commander gazed at him in wrath, and then a light flashed across his mental vision.

"Now see what you've reduced me to, Gray, you infernal young sinner. I sent Stein back with the orderly you picked out, and here's the result."

"Well, sir, if dirt's what you want, this——"

"But it isn't," interrupted the colonel. "I want an orderly, and not a scarecrow. Now you see, do you?"

"I think I do, sir. Neither a rag doll nor a Dutch doll, neither the cleanest nor the dirtiest, just a happy medium, one who can call names in English preferred, not so swell as to put our head-quarters to shame, nor so shabby as to make us blush for all—— Well, I think I understand you."

But here the colonel interposed with language so forcible as to put a stop even to Gray's fun, which he would stand, as a rule, longer than anybody else's. Meantime, the discovery having been made that recruit Schramm was but a novice in English, whatsoever he might be in German, that young soldier was told by the sergeant of the guard to "Go on out of this and back to your bunkies. Sure you couldn't tell a Sioux from a shyster unless he shot you in Dutch," which, being interpreted, was understood to mean that until he had mastered the English language he wasn't fit for sentry duty. And so, much troubled, the young fellow went to Sergeant Schultz, a Prussian like himself, and sorrowfully told his tale.

Never in his life had Private Schramm's blue eyes gazed on scenes and soldiers such as these. Just what he expected to find in the ranks of the American army he had revealed as yet to no one. It was the eventful summer of '76, when, amazed at the force and fury with which the Sioux had fought and baffled the commands of Crook and Custer, Terry and Gibbon, Congress authorized the immediate enlistment of twenty-five hundred men to fill the gaps in the four regiments of cavalry engaged in the campaign. No credentials were required. Eager for a chance to get to the new diggings—the Black Hills of Dakota—at the expense of Uncle Sam, swarms of toughs were enlisted in the slums of New York and Philadelphia and Baltimore, and four weeks later were deserting by the dozen, with horse and equipment complete, as they reached the wasted army in the field. But there was leaven in the lump. "That young feller's a soldier clean through," said the recruiting sergeant when Schramm gave his name, age, nationality, etc., answering promptly so long as the questions were propounded in the German tongue.

"Can't he speak English at all?" said the recruiting officer, doubtfully. "Well, what's the odds, after all, so long as he's only going to be scalped? Swear him in." And so, silent, observant, patient, Schramm was shipped westward with the first lot of victims, turned over to the waiting officers at the cavalry dépôt, was marched out to camp and set to work grooming a horse the very evening of his arrival, and turned out for drill the next morning, when, barring a certain quaint habit of throwing the left foot far out to the front at the command "march," and a queer way of executing "about face," it was found that he was far better drilled in the rudiments, at least, than the corporal detailed as his instructor. The carbine manual was strange to him, but not so the sabre. He handled it like a master. He knew how to clean and polish arms, belt buckles, etc., in a way that the few old hands at the post recognized at once as "expert." He was besieged by German sergeants with queries as to his past history, but said he preferred to keep all that to himself. Yes, he had served. No use in denying that. He had been through certain cadet schools and entered a certain regiment of Hussars; which one he wouldn't say, neither could they find out by writing. It was nobody's business but his own, anyhow, said he. The United States had adopted him, and he was now an Amerikaner, a "Freiwilliger," too. Long before the weary march to the hills was over he had demonstrated the fact that he was a fine horseman and a good shot. Lieutenant Ray, commander of the big detachment, had more than once spoken of it; and so, when finally they reached the wild romantic hills and were distributed among the regiments there awaiting them, Schramm looked with wonderment in his soul, if not in his eyes, at the slouch-hatted, rough-shirted, unshaven officers, at the ragged mob of the rank and file, at their gaunt skeletons of horses, and marvelled that his strange fortunes had made him a soldier in so strange a service.

Wisely he kept his views to himself, making no comment even to the Germans who were disposed to be sociable and to question him as to his antecedents. In two days a strong column marched away,—all broken-down men and horses and all raw recruits being left behind,—but with Schramm, evidently an educated cavalryman, riding buoyantly in the ranks of D Troop on the spirited roan he had bestridden all the way from the railway. "Whatever they look," thought he, "these fellows are mightily at home on the frontier." Sergeant Schultz explained that they always left their uniforms in garrison when in the field after Indians, but called his attention to the fact that they never lived better in the old country than these rough-looking fellows were living now. Already the ills of the summer were forgotten.

Whether he forgot or not, Schramm made no reply. He was well content with his rations, for field appetite is a wondrous sauce, and soldier coffee with bacon, beans, "Dutch oven" bread, and antelope steak have a relish in the keen October air known only to the frontiersman. Schramm, from looking pale, peaked, and a trifle pathetic when he stepped from the crowded train at the railway, had sprouted a fuzzy beard, blistered the skin of his cheeks and nose in the hot noonday sunshine, seared his eyelids by intemperate ablutions in alkali water,

and was making commendable progress in plains-craft and plains-English. In three weeks' scouting down the South Cheyenne, with the Bad Lands on the right and worse lands on the left, he became so proficient in the cavalry art of pre-empting a good patch of grass for his horse that his troop commander, closely watching his new recruit, remarked that that young fellow would be a valuable non-commissioned officer some day, if he hadn't been already. Like the Germans of his heterogeneous troop, the captain was of the opinion that Schramm had a history.

One evening, far down the valley where not an Indian had been seen or heard of, the outlying sentries reported a bunch of black-tailed deer in the foot-hills to the northwest. Lieutenant Morgan was in command of the guard, and his captain was officer of the day. Morgan took a squad of three or four men, mounted, and rode away down the wind, while a party of officers scrambled up the bank to the edge of the broad prairie to watch the sport. It was just then that Schramm, his blue eyes ablaze, clicked his heels together, stood bolt upright, and began, coloring even redder in combined eagerness and embarrassment, "Bitte, Herr Rittmeister," then, desperately plunging into trooper's English as he had heard it spoken, "Kin I go along mit dem fellers alretty?" and as Manning nodded assent, he saluted with marked precision, bored a hole with his heel in the alkali dust in punctilious execution of the "*kehrt*," sprang bareback on his horse, and rode away, carbine in hand, after his trooper comrades. Half an hour went by, and the herd, still undisturbed, continued to graze. The hunters were out of sight among the depressions of the surface. The captain sent for his field-glass, and other officers joined him and levelled their binoculars on the distant quarry,—just a deer family having a quiet dinner together in a sheltered ravine opening out into the broad bottom of the stream. Presently, one after another, three or four black objects crawled around a point. "Yonder's Morgan," said the watchers. Suddenly the deer family tossed high their heads, then darted away into the hills and were out of sight in an instant. Two or three of the younger officers set up a laugh of derision: "Pretty hunting that is!" But the elders looked grave. "What scared them?" was the query. The black dots of hunters had halted, evidently in surprise. There seemed to be a moment of consultation, and then all three could be seen running back in the direction in which they came.

"Going for the horses to chase the deer," laughed young Leonard, who sneered at Morgan's claims as a deer-stalker.

"Chase be hanged! Look there! the deer are chasing them."

Then uprose every man in mad excitement, for their senior lieutenant, Mr. Ray, had sprung to his feet and rushed for his horse. "Deer, you damned fool! It's Indians!" he cried; and, shouting for some of the guard to follow him, Mr. Ray threw himself upon his nimble sorrel and darted out over the prairie to the rescue. In a minute half a dozen men were stringing along after him, while the alarm sounded among the cottonwoods and the herd-guards came driving in their excited *cavalladas*.

Meantime, there was the mischief to pay. Leaving two men as

horse-holders in a little swale, Morgan with three others, including the eager young Prussian, crawled off for a shot at the herd. They were in plain view, and utterly unsuspicious of approach from that quarter, when, all on a sudden, the buck started, stamped, tossed his crest, and away they all flew up the grassy ravine. Rising to his feet to study the situation, after a word or two of caution to his comrades, Morgan was saluted by the whistle of a bullet past his head,—another,—another,—and each coupled with the sharp report of the rifle.

"Back to your horses, quick!" he shouted.

All four ran, only to catch sight of a party of Sioux lashing straight down the slope to head them off, while others, firing rapidly, gave chase from across the ravine to their rear. Before he had gone twenty yards Morgan saw Schramm stumble and fall, face downward.

"What is it?" he cried, running and bending over him. "Are you hit? Here, let me help you, man." And poor Schramm could only clasp his hand about his leg and plead in English equally broken, "Lauf'—Roon! Herr Lieutenant. Ach Gott! I can it not make." Then Morgan, big powerful fellow, cut him short and swung the little ex-hussar on his back and plunged ahead, heedless of his captive's splutter and struggles. But yelling Sioux and whistling bullets both were gaining. Another minute, and down went lieutenant and man, carrier and carried, and this time Schramm, rolling over and over, never let go of his carbine, but, lying prone, levelled it over a little hummock, and sent a shot square at the foremost Indian, tripping his calico pony in the nick of time. Morgan echoed with another. "Good boy, Schramm! Give 'em some more," he cried, as the charging warriors veered and opened out. Then came other shots from the swale in rear. Only one man held the horses now; the others—the whole squad—were blazing away.

"Check to your game, my bucks!" panted Morgan, loading, firing, and missing again. "It's little but lead you'll get out of this outfit." The Indian bullets were biting at the turf all around him, yet mercifully flying wild. Schramm, bleeding fast, was paling, yet keeping up his fire, wondering how it was he could so rarely hit those yelling, painted, feathered fiends darting about them only a few hundred yards away. Then, rising on his knees, he shouted Prussian taunt and challenge.

"Lie down, you fool!" yelled his officer, rolling over to him, and, seizing his shoulder, Morgan forced him to earth. Not a second too soon: an Indian had sprung from his pony, taken deliberate aim, and sent a shot that just grazed the hand that pinned him down; and then came thunder of hoofs far out over the prairie, and the rush of comrades to the rescue, and then the Sioux, firing to the last minute, whirled away up the ravine, and Morgan's deer-hunt was over. That night, while Ray, with his troop, was still out in pursuit, Morgan lay with a shot-hole through the left shoulder at the bivouac fire, and was chaffed and condoled with in moderation over the failure of his venison-chase, and took it all meekly enough. He had bagged no game, had well-nigh lost his own and other lives, had ridden almost blindly into Indian ambuscade, and yet, in point of result, as it turned out, that was about the best day's work he had done in all his life.

II.

"If ever a man came into the cavalry who deserved well of his country," said his colonel, "it is Morgan." He was a good soldier, but a bad manager,—a combination far more frequent than is probably known. He came into the regiment in '66, burdened with a wife and a war debt. A capital trooper, he had won honors with the sabre in the Shenandoah; had risen to the command of his battalion, and was urged to take a commission in the regular army. Famous names backed his application, but he had been held to duty in Texas while earlier-discharged volunteers were picking up the plums in the newly-authorized regiments. He got in eventually as second lieutenant where his own lieutenants had gone in as first. He had the brevet of a lieutenant-colonel of volunteers and the rank and pay of a low-down subaltern of regulars when he and his wife and a little daughter joined the regiment in the South. When he came to the frontier after five years of reconstruction duty, her health was impaired as much as his prospects. Morgan was supporting an invalid wife, three children, a negro "mammy," an egregious folly of a female nurse, and a scattered indebtedness of no one knew just how many hundreds or thousands, all on a first lieutenant's pay, and that hypothecated. He loved his wife and little ones; he was attached to his comrades and his profession; but every month found him more dangerously involved. He had no relatives to help him; she had some who might, but didn't. He wore old clothes, stinted himself in every way, yet saw no light ahead, and, to make a long story short, would have thanked God for the chance to end it all, but for the thought of those helpless little ones, when at last the wife, not he, was taken. She had been practically bedridden for two years, and it would have been mercy to take her long before, but Morgan couldn't see that. He wept sorely over the cold, emaciated form, then roused himself, gathered his children in his strong arms and folded them to his heart. "You must be more than ever 'little mother' to them now, Connie," said he, as he kissed the white forehead of his eldest. She was only fifteen that spring, yet for two years had been more woman than child, trying to help mother, trying to be a comfort to "poor daddy," whose face took on deep and deeper lines with every month, trying to be a teacher and playmate and mother all in one to sister Lottie, only eight, and to burly, brown-haired, uproarious little Billy, the one member of the household whose spirits were unquenchable. There were ministering hands and loving hearts at the rude old frontier fort, and in poor Mrs. Morgan's last days, far from her home and kindred, there was no "lack of woman's nursing," no "dearth of woman's tears." Everybody seemed to go in the solemn little procession when, afoot, they followed the wasted form to its bleak and lonely resting-place in the post cemetery out on the open prairie.

"My God! to think of poor Carrie's having to be buried in such a dreary waste as this!" moaned the widower that evening as some of his comrades strove to comfort him. He had written to her relatives —she had brothers and a sister married and well-to-do—telling of the

inevitable end so soon to come, intimating that she longed to be taken home and to lie by her mother's side in the shaded church-yard, but that he actually had not a cent. The brothers were very sorry. Both in their younger days had freely borrowed the captain's tens and twenties and lived high with sister Cad, to whom the big-hearted dragoon sent each month four-fifths of his pay. Pretty sister Lottie, too, made her home with Caroline, "who would otherwise be so lonesome," much of the four years Morgau served at the front. His pay was the main support of the family, in fact, for the boys were still attending school, and the old man's business languished as the war went on. But all this was something they rather wished to forget in the years that followed. They didn't want to grow up into actively inimical relations with their elder sister's husband, yet having so long lived on his bounty, how could they, being ordinary mortals, help learning to hate him unless they could forget the benefits of the past? Bob and Sam, of whom she so often talked, were prosperous business men now, with wives and olive-branches and vines and fig-trees of their own, and how could their wives or they be expected to want to have her, a dark shadow at the fireside, to linger, languish, and slowly die on their hands? Neither brother felt that he could stand the expense of fetching Carrie home. Each thought the other ought to do it, and both thought that Lottie should,—that is, Lottie's husband. But Lottie's husband knew not the impoverished trooper on the far frontier, nor his wife, nor his children, and Lottie was not particularly anxious that he should. Her beauty had captivated the brilliant young lawyer when professional business called him from Cleveland to Saginaw, but it took all he could command to keep up the style in which they lived now. A gay winter was coming on, and there was very little interest and less discussion among the three over the question which should succor Carrie, and so poor Morgan's humble appeal was fruitless.

It was December when she was laid away. In February a strong column was sent to break up the Sioux strongholds to the north, with the not unusual result of breaking up several households at the fort. The Sioux lost nothing they did not get back; the soldiers got back nothing they lost; in fact, many of them did not get back at all. The savage chiefs held a council to settle on the spot for the next battle, and the soldiers a court to settle on the spot the responsibility for the last, which was a failure. It was found that beyond certain serious casualties the damages were mainly at the hands of Jack Frost to the feet and fingers of the foemen, though several officers were declared to have suffered in mind, body, and estate, and others in reputation, which was odd, in view of the fact, as shown before the court, that the accused had no reputation to lose. Morgan, happily, was spared all participation in this hapless campaign, being retained at the fort because of recent bereavement and his motherless children. He was made commissary to help him out of trouble, and thereby was plunged into worse. When the command went out in midwinter he would have been glad to go and never return, but, as has been said, for those little faces at home. Another column was sent out in May, and others fol-

lowed that in June, and still Morgan was held at the fort on commissary duty until later the direful tidings flashed in over the wires that Custer and his pet troops were wiped out; then everybody had to go. Morgan strained "Little Mother" to his heart, praying God to guard and bless the babies and bring him back to them in safety. Mrs. Warren, their next-door neighbor, promised they should be the objects of her tender care. They had old Mammy with them still, but the nurse had flitted eastward months before,—one good riddance at least, —and by the end of July Morgan was serving out groceries and taking in money as field commissary. A column on frontier campaign with only the clothes it had on and with never a wagon could hardly be expected to be burdened with a safe in which to secure the commissary's funds. Uncle Sam has a simple way of reimbursing himself in the event of loss: he stops the commissary's pay until the amount is covered, and the commissary may stop the hungry mouths at home meanwhile as best he can,—that isn't Uncle Sam's business. Morgan had over seven hundred and fifty dollars in "greenbacks" in the lining of his canvas hunting-coat when they reached the Southern hills in October, and not a cent of it when they marched out on the 15th. The campaign being virtually over, all danger, hardship, work, and heavy responsibility at an end, a staff captain came by rail and stage to take over the funds and stores of the line lieutenant and charge up to him every cent's worth that had leaked or dribbled from the mule-packs, a species of charging that differed from that expected of a linesman, in that it involved none of the perils, yet promised greater reward.—You may be assured this gentleman did not come without a safe.—And Morgan, riding from the bivouac to the stage station, a mile away, the very evening of his successor's arrival, was lassoed on his horse in Cinnabar Cañon, gagged, bound, robbed of his package of greenbacks, all in the flash of a bull's-eye. Picked up, stunned, ten minutes thereafter, he could not describe his assailants, but certain hard characters with the command, some of the precious gang of recruits just arrived, made off that night with their horses, equipments, and everything. Certain civil officials gave chase. There was still hope they might be overhauled and the money captured before they could reach the mining towns. Meantime, Morgan, not severely hurt, was ordered to join his troop. It was God's mercy that only an hour before the robbery he had counted out every cent for which he was accountable in the presence of Old Tintop and his adjutant, otherwise he would have had to stagger under the accusation of having made away with the money and made up the story.

In vain the rough old campaigner had sought to cheer Morgan by assurance that the party sent out in chase couldn't help gathering in the robbers, who, with one exception, were strangers to the frontier. Morgan groaned in spirit. "No, colonel, it is useless. Luck has been dead against me ever since we furled the Wolverine guidons and I joined the regulars. That money will never be found, and I am eight hundred dollars more in debt than I was a month ago, when it was all I could stagger under. It's only worse and more of it." And here this forty-year-old fatalist turned away and buried his bearded face in his hands.

And now, a few weeks later, with a hole in his shoulder and fever in his veins, Mr. Morgan was being borne along homeward in a mule-litter, hopeless and sick at heart, totally unconscious of the fact that one man at least in the long dusty column looked up to him with an enthusiastic gratitude, even while looking down on him from the saddle. Schramm's right leg had been shot through midway between ankle and knee, but the fracture was simple, and the wounded limb was skilfully dressed, set in splints, and Schramm rode in a litter a week or two, as ordered, then his Teutonic prayers took effect on the "Herr Wundarzt," and he was allowed to swing the leg over the handsome roan his captain had promised he should have again as soon as he was able to straddle the beast and settle the question why he had named him Bredow. We had little or no time for war-history in the cavalry in those days.

Morgan could not but note how affectionately Schramm's blue eyes would beam upon him and how full of anxious sympathy were his frequent inquiries as to whether there were not something he could do for the Herr Lieutenant. They sent the two, with others, in together to the old fort on the railway, and Schramm, whose wound was the more serious, was much the sooner recovered, and bustling around as though nothing had happened, while the veteran lieutenant, whose hurt was slight, seemed unable to rally. There are wounds that sap the vital forces worse than knife or bullet. Morgan was fretting himself to death. He broke down utterly when Old Tintop, a month later, came in to see him on his arrival at the post.

"What can I do, colonel?" he moaned. "I am too old to resign and try to find employment at home. There's no room for crippled dragoons there. Yet my creditors are hounding me, my pay may be stopped any minute to settle this commissary business, and then what will become of my children?"

It was too much for Tintop. He had in his desk that moment the fatal paper received from Washington. It was all very well for the board of survey and the department commander to exonerate Lieutenant Morgan from blame, but the watch-dogs of the treasury couldn't allow him to drop that seven hundred and fifty dollars. There was no doubt that he was robbed. The robbers, in fact, deserting recruits *en route* to the mines, were easily overhauled by experienced frontiersmen who "lit out" in pursuit the moment the affair was heard of. It was scandalous on the part of "tenderfoot toughs" from the far East to rob an army disbursing officer—and expect to get away with the swag. Buckskin Joe, Lopsided Pete, and other local celebrities lost little time in overhauling the Bowery gang and recovering such valuables as they had; but who was to overhaul Joe and Pete? The auditor said Mr. Morgan ought to have kept that money in the safe. The department commander, striving to aid a good soldier, pointed out that they didn't carry safes when on Indian campaign; if they did, they would even less frequently catch the Indians. But it availed nothing. What did the Treasury Department care whether Indians were caught or not? Mr. Morgan was held to have violated the spirit of his instructions in that he went to Captain Stone in town to turn over the money, instead of

waiting for Captain Stone to come to him. Then the general pointed out that Morgan was ordered to march with the command at daybreak, and therefore had to turn over the money that night. But the bureau officials couldn't see it. Let Lieutenant Morgan get a bill of relief through Congress, said the pragmatic official, well knowing that such bills are the outcome of influence, not innocence. The colonel went to the office, and by way of comforting himself for the weakness which prompted him to blow his nose and wipe his eyes very often before leaving Morgan, and to kiss Connie and Lot several times after, pitched into Mr. Gray, his perennial chopping-block, and Gray, finding meekness and silence not what was needed, fired back. They exchanged volleys a minute, Gray having all the advantage of sense and the colonel of sound, and ended, as usual, by the old man saying he wouldn't give a tinker's dam for an adjutant he couldn't pitch into when he had to pitch into somebody, or that couldn't talk back. "I'm all broke up about Morgan. Can't we do something to pull him out of his hole?"

So they wrote letters, did the officers, to Morgan's wife's relatives, setting forth how brave and deserving and unfortunate he was, and that something must be done for those children. It's all well enough in the eyes of one's wife's relatives to be brave and deserving, but they have no use for a man who is unfortunate. In fact, if he is only fortunate they care very little how brave he may be, and less for his deserts. Robert answered the colonel's missive, but the others did not. Rob said they had already been put to much expense on their sister's account,—which, as they wore no mourning and published no notice in the papers at the time of her death, was an out-and-out whopper. He furthermore said if something had to be done for those children to go ahead and do it,—which was simply indecent. Tintop had a copy made and sent it to a classmate, a distinguished officer of engineers whose office was in Detroit, and whose duties made him well known in influential circles, and the colonel made inquiries and sent reports. The boys were well-to-do, in a paying business, both of them; and as for Aunt Lottie, she wasted more money in six months than would clothe, feed, and comfort her army nieces and nephew as many years. "But," said the engineer, "I fancy her husband owes very much more than Mr. Morgan, and the crash may come any day."

But what Tintop could not do through Morgan's wife's relatives he brought about in other ways. The engineer colonel knew prominent business men who were comrades of Morgan's in the old Wolverine brigade, famous at Gettysburg, Winchester, Five Forks, and Appomattox. Some had amassed wealth, many were prominent, all were sympathetic, and when they took hold it was with a vim. Meantime, however, valuable time was lost, and poor Morgan was breaking down under his load. Meantime, too, ministering angels, army wives and mothers, none so wealthy that their charity entailed no sacrifice, none so poor that it could not and did not help, moved by that boundless pity and sympathy which motherless little ones excite, were lending helping hands about the cheerless quarters and bringing grateful tears and

smiles to Connie's anxious face. Mrs. Warren, Mrs. Woods, and others had laid their matronly heads together and organized a committee of ways and means. Of course nothing could be done to excite Morgan's suspicions or wound his pride. Connie, too, was old beyond her years and shrank from what might look like dependence, but she was too young to manage household expenses. Old Mammy had none but extravagant ideas, as befitted the retainer of a good old Southern family, and the father was practically helpless. It was at this stage of the proceedings that Fagan, the veteran striker who had long been on domestic duty for the Morgans, in accordance with the system then in vogue, was taken down with acute rheumatism and went to hospital, and that Private Schramm, who for days had never missed an opportunity of inquiring for the lieutenant and occasionally lending a helping hand, came suddenly into prominence. Somebody had to be detailed as Morgan's "striker." There were always quite a number of the enlisted men who were eager to be placed on such duty, thereby earning five dollars a month, living on better rations, escaping guard duty, drills, and roll-calls, and having only to bring in wood and water, black boots, clean equipments, etc. Schramm was reserved, temperate, studious, a model young soldier, daily acquiring more thorough knowledge of military duty and of the English language as spoken by the blue-coats on the border. Two or three times the doctor, finding him hovering about the quarters, had sent him over to the hospital for medicine, or the like, and Schramm, saluting with Teutonic precision, had obeyed every order with soldierly alacrity. More than once when Fagan, groaning and coughing and wheezing in the keen wintry air, seemed unable to bear his burden of firewood into the house, Schramm had laughingly lent his aid, and one evening he came suddenly upon the tall, slender, fragile form of Connie staggering into the kitchen door, heavily laden with logs. With one spring the Prussian was at her side, the blue eyes kindling, and he who hitherto had never presumed to address the "gnädige Fräulein" except with hand at temple and heels aclick, briskly dispossessed her of her load, and bore it into the sitting-room, where Lot and Billy were squabbling over their blocks in the wintry gloaming, and Connie blushed to her temples as she thanked the stalwart young soldier, once more standing erect and brushing the bark-dust from his overcoat.

"Father sent Fagan to town," she explained, "and he should have been home an hour ago. We are so much obliged to you, Schr-r-r-amm." And Schr-r-r-amm seemed so hard a word to say that she blushed still more, hesitated, and stammered,—she who, garrison-bred, had never heard the private soldier addressed in any other way.

It was that evening, later, that old Fagan declared himself all broke up, which meant just the opposite, that he had broken down and must quit work. Mrs. Turner, a light-hearted and thoughtless young matron, was sitting with Connie at the moment.

"He'll go to hospital, won't he?" she said. "Then how much better it will be! Captain Manning will let you have Schramm." But, to Mrs. Turner's surprise, Connie promptly declared she would not have Schramm.

"Why-y, I thought he was so devoted to your father,—so nice in every way."

"Certainly," said Connie, with decision; "he is devoted to father, and he is simply altogether too nice to be put on any such duty."

"Did you ever know so strange a child?" said Mrs. Turner, telling of the conversation a little later. "She fairly put me down as though I were a chit of fifteen—like herself."

"Ye-es, instead of being old enough to be her mother," suggested a fair rival, mischievously, and Mrs. Turner bridled, but said no more.

But Manning, too, fell into error. Informed by his first sergeant at tattoo that Fagan was down sick and the lieutenant without a striker, in all kindness and desire to help he asked who would be the best man to send, and the sergeant promptly answered, "Schramm. Schramm was all the time over there, and doubtless he would be glad to take the detail." Manning hesitated a moment. He had other views for this young soldier, whose usefulness in the troop could become very great as soon as he mastered a little more English. But he called him forthwith. Schramm was among his comrades, awaiting the assembly signal, and, summoned abruptly, he stood attention in a foot of snow and answered, "Zu Befehl, Herr Rittmeister," before he could catch himself and blurt out "Ca-Capitan." His gloved hand remained, Prussian fashion, in salute.

"Schramm, I hate to lose you from the troop, but would you care to go to Lieutenant Morgan's as orderly?"

"I, Herr Rittmeister?"

The roll of the *r*'s was almost like that of a drum. The blood mounted to his cheeks. He stammered, looked utterly bewildered, stumbled, and between embarrassment and sense of subordination stood meekly mute.

"Don't you want to go?" asked Manning.

"Bitte, Herr Capitan, unless I haf it to do."

"Oh, no, by no means. I supposed you'd really like it," said Manning. "I would much rather you didn't. That's all." And Schramm nearly fell over himself in the effort to salute and face about in a foot-deep drift and escape before the Herr Rittmeister might change his mind. "Whom can we send, sergeant? I want a good steady man, for Mr. Morgan is far from mending."

"Well, sir, there's Penner: he ain't good for nothing else."

And so it came to pass that Penner, a mild-mannered, moony young barbarian, went gladly to duties with which he was far more familiar than the grooming of frolicsome steeds and the tramping of lonely sentry-posts. And Schramm, redoubling the assiduity of his attention to military duties, none the less kept up his frequent visits to the Morgans' quarters, modestly presenting himself at the rear door and laboriously inquiring how the Herr Lieutenant had passed the night and whether he could do aught to serve him during the day. Penner was soon sufficiently domesticated to answer these queries himself, but not infrequently Constance came to answer the soldier's knock, and then at sight of the gnädige Fräulein Schramm's manner would become simply extravagant in precision and deference. Within the week after

he declined the place the soldiers were saying Schramm "wouldn't be dog-robber, but was bossing Penner's job all the same." And certain it was that Penner owed much of his usefulness to the suggestions of his better-informed countryman. Meantime, Mrs. Warren and Mrs. Woods were doing all that lay in their power to help about the house, and another loving woman, who devoted two hours each morning to the lessons of her own little ones, had induced Constance to send Lot and Billy to her as recruits in the kindergarten, and the officers, dropping in each evening to cheer the old man up a bit, still striving to hold from him the fact that the Treasury Department had proved deaf to all martial appeals in his behalf, were made glad one bitter evening by a despatch from the Wolverine Senator. The old Michigan brigade had still "a pull," and Tintop himself went whistling down the line to tell Morgan the glad news that he had friends at court.

"Bill of relief for Morgan will be presented," wired the magnate. "Meantime, no stoppage allowed."

"Who could have fixed this for me?" asked Morgan, gratefully, with glistening eyes.

"Oh, your friends at home did it," answered Tintop, promptly, with pardonable thought of how much stirring the friends at the front had first to do. "What they ought to stir about now is to help you out with these—these—other claims; I don't mean pay them for you, of course,—you wouldn't want them to do that,—but fix it so that you could capitalize 'em someway; raise a little fund that you could repay at so much a month with six per cent. interest, and then wipe out all these pressing things."

Poor Morgan! *his* first thought had been that now he could order a suitable head-stone for Carrie's lonely grave.

III.

The winter went out in storm and bluster. The springtide set in with reluctant flow. The prairie wastes, swept clean by furious gales in March, rerobed in glistening white in April, peeped forth through ragged rents in their fleecy mantle at the soft touch of the south wind, then, lulled by the plash of warm summer shower, went to sleep one evening late in May, still thinly veiled in white, and when the rosy breath of wakening dawn stole faintly over the grassy billows, lo! all in a night the face of nature had changed, and the foot-hills met the sunshine clothed in fairest, freshest green. Who can welcome spring as could the exiles of the old days on the frontier? How those fair women, those restless little ones, seemed to glow and gladden after the long, long months of seclusion when, snow-bound, they were penned within the stockade or limited to the sentry-lines of some straggling prairie post! Now swarming forth like bees they came to greet the sunshine, the softening air, the tiny, shrinking little flowers trembling in the breeze along the southward slopes, and one exquisite morning late in May, perched on the very verge of the steep bluff overlooking

the stream, Constance Morgan had flung to the winds her rippling mane of auburn hair and stood stretching forth a pair of long, slender arms, encased in very shabby and shining serge, as though welcoming the first sight of the distant lowlands,—the broad, beautiful valley of the Mini Ska. All the long winter she had borne on her white shoulders the cares of an army home, and that a home without a mother. Loving hearts and hands, it is true, were there to aid her. Morgan's devotion to his invalid wife during her two years of martyrdom and his grief over her loss were matters that had won deep sympathy even in a crowded garrison bent on getting all the enjoyment possible out of their few months of home life. All the previous summer, spring, and fall officers and men of the cavalry, at least, had spent in exciting campaign, and no man could tell how soon the order would come returning them once more to the field, leaving the wives and little ones to watch and pray. "Make hay while the sun shines" seemed to be the social axiom of the cavalry in those days. Enjoy the too brief days as best ye may, for soon the summer will come, when all men must work at their appointed trade, and seven months out of twelve and sometimes more it meant separation from the loved ones within the guarded limits of the forts, a separation that, in too many cases, proved but the entrance upon that which on earth, at least, is final. There were music and dancing, play-acting and feasting, therefore, through the winter at Ransom, and frequent exchange of jovial hospitality with the big-hearted townsfolk over and away at the transcontinental road, but there wasn't a day when somebody, from Tintop down, wasn't sure to drop in and have a chat or a game of checkers, or in the evening a hand at whist, with Morgan, who sat up in an easy-chair and was made as comfortable as willing hearts and hands could devise, and Mrs. Vinton not only taught Lot and Billy as she taught her own, but time and again sent them home in garments newly fashioned, but with pardonable mendacity represented to be something she had that didn't fit her daughter or that her little Jim had outgrown. Connie's clear eyes saw through the stratagem, and her soft red lips quivered as she kissed the fair round cheek of the loving woman who so well knew how to bless and comfort, yet rob the act of every hint of charity. And strangely, too, Connie's scant supply of commissary was eked out by many a dainty sent to Morgan's door from somewhere along the line. No one ever gave a dinner, or luncheon, or supper party, that long winter, without a remembrance of some kind for those motherless kids, oftentimes including some comforting beverage for old Morgan himself. Even the sutler, whom the men damned for a skinflint, found means to "chip in" unknown to Morgan, who didn't at all like him, and the surreptitious dozens of stone bottles of stout, glass dittoes of Bass and Budweiser, that had been smuggled in by the back gate during the last year of Mrs. Morgan's illness, never found their way on the bill. He had sent Connie at Christmas a dress of soft black cashmere over which the child's womanly eyes had glistened, and which, impulsively, she had taken to her father's room, opening it before him and saying, "Isn't it lovely? Wasn't it just lovely of him?" And then she was brought to sudden realization of

this rancor towards the trader by the flush that overspread Morgan's face and the heavy frown between his eyes.

"Connie, child, you shall have it, of course; you need it; but we can't take presents from Curran. He must put it on the bill," he said.

But neither on Connie's slender back nor Curran's bulky bill did those dress-goods ever appear. She sent him a misspelled, grateful little note, saying how it touched them all that he should have so kindly remembered her, but papa was "inflexable" in his views about accepting "presants" from friends they might never be able to repay, and honest Curran,—honest at least in his desire to do a kindness to the tall slip of a girl with the big brown eyes and auburn hair that made him think, he sometimes said, of a colleen he'd lost long years before,—honest Curran mistook her meaning entirely, thought her words Morgan's, and, mindful of some caustic comments the big lieutenant had made anent sutlers' checks he sought to collect at the pay-table several years before, had all his Irish aroused and was made fighting mad. "I'll sind him a resated bill, bedad, and cut his acqueentance intirelee," said Curran that night in relating the incident to some of the boys in the club-room, whereupon that ne'er-do-well and scapegrace Briggs promptly besought him to take like cognizance of the first thing he, Lieutenant Briggs, might say, as he despaired otherwise of ever squaring his account.

But the incident bore its weight of woe to Connie, despite the merriment it gave the boys. Acting under the advice of his colonel and his friends, Morgan was diligently turning over to the adjutant fifty dollars a month of his scanty pay in order that critics and creditors alike might know he was doing all a poor devil of a broken-down lieutenant could do to pay his debts without absolutely starving his household. The balance went to Connie, and with this she was expected to feed, clothe, and comfort the family, pay the cook, laundress, and striker. Morgan had no life-insurance, and in those days could get none. Curran was one of his heaviest creditors, and Curran had been perfectly willing not only to wait, but to open his storehouse or purse-strings still wider for the struggling fellow's benefit. Only so many dollars a month could be parcelled out for the butcher and baker, the grocer and the commissary, and Connie kept her books, and, aided by her lady friends, kept her accounts. But over and above all these necessary expenses were certain dainties and luxuries which Curran had authorized black Mammy to draw for at the store whenever the supply was getting low, and Morgan, insisting now on auditing the accounts, could find no such items on the bills rendered, and the truth came out. Curran went off East to buy goods just then, and Morgan did not write the letter his heart was pouring out when he learned how in secret the rough fellow had been so long his benefactor, but he forbade all such traffic in future, and Lot and Billy howled for oranges and raisins in vain. Christmas found their little stockings filled. Many an army mother, planning for her own brood, had remembered the motherless in the humble quarters down the row. But no one could tell whose hand had sent the rocking-horse and the big wax doll that were found by Penner at the door when he opened the house on

Christmas morning. Suspicion attached to several heads, including Tintop's, whose head, by the way, had been cracked by a shell during the war, and a portion of whose skull, so rumor had it, had been replaced by a silver plate, which led to his wearing a nickname and a wig. But one and all the accused established what Mrs. Whaling once pronounced an alibi, "because they had sent something else." Then they thought of Trooper Schramm, now a fine-looking dragoon, consummately at home in his business; but Schramm hadn't been near the house for two weeks. A paymaster's escort was needed to convoy that official to distant winter cantonments, and Schramm had promptly asked to be allowed to go. This time he didn't say "mit dem fellers" as he had in the field the autumn before, neither did he add "once" or "alretty." Schramm was "studying book English," said the first sergeant. The paymaster got home to his Christmas all right,—he needed no escort when his money was gone,—but Schramm and his squad trotted in two days later, after the turkey and cranberry sauce were all devoured, so Schramm could have had nothing whatever to do with the gifts sent out from town. So long as they had them, Lot and Billy didn't care who was the donor. They believed all the more in Santa Claus. It was Connie who thought and wondered; it was Connie, alas! who hoped and dreamed.

Among the daily visitors to the house Perry Thornton, second lieutenant of Manning's troop, had been prominent all winter, and there wasn't a handsomer, blither boy in all the regiment when he joined. He was barely twenty-two, with a face almost womanly fair, and a form as slender and graceful as boy's could be. He rode and danced and sang well. He didn't drink; he wouldn't gamble. He was a soldier's son, an enthusiastic youngster who had seen some years of schooling and travel in Europe, and who had much to tell of soldiers who had won the V. C. or the Iron Cross. "Now in Europe," said he, "the officer is held as a hero who, at the risk of his life, bore off a wounded comrade to whom it meant death if abandoned." The cross for valor, pinned on his breast by royal hands, was the least reward to which he could look. Joining the regiment just at the end of the autumn work, and reading of the narrow escape of Lieutenant Morgan on the way, Thornton's first longing was to make the acquaintance of the gallant subaltern who had so bravely stood by the humble recruit and got his wound in saving him. Down went his ideal to dust when a grizzled, careworn, sad-faced veteran was borne from the ambulance into the homely quarters, and somebody said, "The old man's about petered." Thornton could not understand it. "In England or in Germany officers and men would have been lining the way and standing at salute," said he, "for a fellow who did what Mr. Morgan did."

"O-h, up there when he went deer-hunting, do you mean? Oh, yes, I remember,—helping Schramm out when he got hit. Ye-es, that was all right," said one of the young gentlemen of the regiment, and in so saying conveyed the idea to the new-comer that there was nothing in that sort of thing to excite remark. It was the rule, not the exception, in the American cavalry. "We'd all do just as much,"—as,

indeed, very probably they would. But Thornton determined he would cultivate Morgan, decorated or not, and so it had happened that it was the "plebe," the newest comer to the regiment, who spent an hour almost every afternoon before stables playing checkers with the invalid veteran, rarely noticing silent, busy Connie, who came and went, or sat beside them with her needlework, darning the youngsters' stockings or sewing on buttons by the dozen, yet saying never a word. Perry had no end of interest in his new profession, but none whatever in children. It was the proper thing for him to be devoted to the senior subaltern who in other armies, perhaps, would have won such distinction, and he wrote with both pride and complacency to his friends at home of his daily intercourse with a fellow who did what Beresford was V. C.'d for at Ulundi. "But nobody out here seems to think it worth mentioning," he added. He was immensely proud of being second lieutenant in a troop whose captain had won three brevets with the regulars, and whose first lieutenant had done as much with the volunteers, both in the great civil war; but he hadn't been long enough in the service to find out that brevets followed on the heels of the great Rebellion like rain on the boom of a battle, deluging everybody who happened to be around. He found Morgan loved to hear of life in foreign armies, while no one else had time to listen. He loved to talk, and so he came. He loved to hear of cavalry campaigns during the war, and soon got Morgan to telling and explaining, and so, little by little, he came to be looked upon as the sunshine of their day. He was "pulling Morgan out of himself," and when the spring came on the "old man" was surely better, able to sun himself on the southern porch and watch the drills on the broad parade. Connie was but a child. Who could have a thought for her? And so here she stood this exquisite May morning, just bordering on womanhood, as the sweet spring buds were bursting into bloom, and with yearning, outstretched arms, with a deeper, fonder glow in the big brown eyes than mortal yet had seen, gazing longingly away down the distant valley, down along the silver windings of the stream, fringed by the fresh green of the cottonwoods, away from the dull brown buildings of the old frontier post, away from barracks, quarters, and corral, away from its bustling life and cares and sorrows, away from that picketed enclosure far out over the prairie where now the loved mother had been resting long months beyond the twelve, away from aging father, from laughing girl and romping boy, Connie Morgan's heart, shining through her steadfast eyes, was following the fast-fading dust-cloud that told where the squadrons were marching sturdily away to drive the Indians from their old haunts down the wild wastes of the Mini Ska, and Perry Thornton riding on his first campaign.

IV.

The cavalry battalion had been gone only two days. Some few of the officers' families, well assured that it would be Thanksgiving in earnest before they could hope to see the campaigners again, had

taken wing to the East and were domiciled with friends or relatives far from scenes which so constantly brought to mind the image of the absent husband and father. In most cases, however, the little households remained at the post, assured by department head-quarters that they should be undisturbed in the tenure of their army homes. Morgan, whose health and spirits had slowly revived as the sun came northward over the line, had striven to convince Old Tintop and the surgeon that it would do him good to go, but was flatly denied the luxury he craved and bidden to remain at the post. The department commander came out to look over the field in early May, and told Morgan that he meant to keep him on duty at the post all summer, in the hope that the autumn would find him promoted to his captaincy. Then he might be able to get an order to go before a retiring board and so home to the old State and old friends he had not seen for years. Morgan thanked the kind-hearted chief for all his help and consideration, but his tired eyes wandered away over the prairie to the lonely grave he often managed to visit now. If it were only possible to retire for good and all, how willingly would he go and be laid away there by Carrie's side, were there only some provision for Constance and the babies! It appalled him to realize that they were dependent absolutely upon so slender a thread as his life; that he must struggle on, must exist, must suffer and try, at least, to be strong that they might not starve. If only those debts were paid, if only he could retire and take the children to some quiet Eastern home, however humble, where they might be sent to school and where Connie might receive the education thus far so utterly neglected, then Morgan could live on, grateful and almost content. He could surely get some clerkship, some desk-work that would enable him to add a few hundred dollars yearly to the allowance of a retired dragoon. He did not begin to know, poor fellow, how universal was the theory among business-men that old soldiers were unfit for business of any kind. He wrote to Carrie's brothers again, saying nothing, of course, of how often and how much he had helped them in the past, and begged them to find some opening that would warrant his retiring. No answer came. He wrote again. Then Bob sent a few curt lines:

"Yours rec'd, contents noted. Tho't Wm. had ans'd or wld have done so. Business very slack. Times hard. No opening of any kind. H'd to dischg two clks last month. Better hang on to your present situation awhile longer. If anything turns up will let you know.

"Yr bro. aff'y."

Morgan read human nature well enough to see just how much that meant. He would "hang on to the situation" as a matter of course, despite the fact that the doctor said the rheumatism would hang on to him as long as he remained in that climate. Both General C—— and the colonel had again interested themselves in his behalf, and the railway managers said they could place him in their office in town when he got ready to retire. The salary was very small, but would help. The work was exacting, however, and the doctor said he simply could not do it in that climate.

"Never mind, old friend, we'll fix it somehow," said Tintop, cheerily, as he came to say good-by, looking very much the younger of the two as Morgan leaned heavily on his stick. "You just stay here and run the ordnance office this summer. There's bound to be promotion by fall." And so, sadly enough, the veteran trooper had seen the squadrons ride away, and he was left sole representative of the commissioned force of his regiment at old Fort Ransom, and not till they had been gone two days did he note that Connie was drooping.

"What is it, Little Mother?" he said, fondly stroking back the tumbling mass of auburn hair and kissing her white forehead. "Tired out with all your household care? Growing too fast? Lot and Billy too much for you now?"

The big pathetic brown eyes were swimming a little, but she looked bravely up. "Perhaps it's spring fever," she said, with an attempt at laughing it all lightly away. "I'm sure there's nothing else. I'm only a trifle fagged. It will be all right now that we all can get out again in the sunshine every day."

She was fastening his necktie for him at the moment, then, patting his grizzled cheek, she took the whisk broom to dust the worn old fatigue-coat preparatory to letting him stump forth on his halting way to the ordnance storehouse, but there came a rousing rat-tat-tat at the front door just at the instant, and, Mammy being up to her elbows in flour and Penner away at the commissary, Connie sprang to answer, and there, precise and soldierly as ever, stood Schramm.

"Why, Schr-r-amm!" she cried, delightedly. "Why—when—how did you get back?"

"Sergeant Schultz, gnädige Fräulein, was sent back with despatches, and I came with him. Is the Herr Lieutenant within? I bring letters." And he handed her a packet.

"Come right in, Schramm; papa will be so glad to see you."

And thus bidden, yet ever unbending, Schramm stepped to the inner door, and there, hand at salute and heels together, he stood attention, his kind blue eyes alight with fidelity and affection.

"Hello, Schramm!" exclaimed Morgan, limping around the big base-burner with extended hand, which the soldier grasped respectfully an instant, then returned to his invariable attitude. "Well, you must have ridden hard."

"Only forty-five miles, sir. We left them in camp on Bear Fork at midnight. There was news from the agency. We go back this afternoon with orders to catch them to-morrow at Painted Lodge."

Hurriedly opening the packet, Morgan glanced over the contents: two official letters for himself, and a smaller note. "Why, Con, this is for you—from Thornton," he said, in surprise. Then, never noting the eager, almost incredulous light that flashed into her eyes, or the instant rush of color to her cheeks and brow, he tore open the first letter, an order from Tintop to send on certain arms for the use of scouts. He glanced quickly up to send Schramm for the ordnance sergeant, but Schramm had disappeared. There stood Constance, her eyes dancing, her red lips parted, her bosom heaving, languor and pallor utterly banished from her face, grasping in both hands the letter

he had given her, devouring its pages with all her soul in her eyes, utterly lost to him and to the world at large in the rapture of a young girl's first dream of love. For the first time in his life Morgan saw that his child was beautiful. For the first time it dawned upon him she was no longer a child. For the first time in his life the father called her to his side and she did not hear.

"Connie," he said. Then at last, almost sternly, "Constance!"

"Oh! what, papa dear? Forgive me, I was so—I was——"

"Yes," said he, vaguely, feeling all helpless and bewildered yet. "Yes. What does he say? Why does he write to you?"

Another rush of color, a new flash in the great brown eyes, yet more hesitancy, more embarrassment.

"Why, there's a letter for you, papa,—he says so; but—this is about something else."

Slowly Morgan turned, unwilling to think, reluctant to believe, unable to wound. It was all so sudden, so utterly unlooked-for. What on earth could Thornton have to say to her? Where was the letter to him? Oh, here, inside Gray's despatch. He tore it open: "Dear Old Man,—In the mail sent forward to catch us there comes a welcome letter from father. He says that Wall, of the Ninth, and Clinton, of the Sixth, have applied for retirement. You are sure of your double bars then before September, and we are all rejoicing. I couldn't help writing, as I wanted to be the first to tell you. Please give the enclosed to Connie. Love to the kids, all three. Yours, P. T." Give what to Connie? He turned the envelope inside out, and there was no enclosure other than the letter. Mechanically he stretched forth his hand.

"Let me see your letter, Connie," he said, and to his dismay she for an instant shrank back. Then, seeing the pain in his eyes, she sprang towards him.

"Oh, do, papa; read every word," she said. "Indeed, I'd rather, —only he—only they didn't want you to know it—just yet." But he did not seem to hear her.

"I only asked to see if it could go inside here," he said, slowly. "Thornton speaks of an enclosure, and probably that was it.—Here, Schramm," he cried, hastening to the door, "will you tell the ordnance sergeant I want him right off? I'll meet him at the store-room. Wait a minute; just give me your arm down the steps." And, leaning on the blue-shirted, muscular shoulder, Morgan stumped away out through the little gate, out across the grassy parade where the infantry companies were busy at drill; and there was a cloud on both faces now, as, saluting at the gate, Schramm fell respectfully to the rear.

And yet, an hour later, when Morgan returned to his quarters and Lot and Billy came tumbling tumultuously to greet him, and he, moody and troubled, sent them off in supreme content to buy a nickel's worth of gum-drops at the store, then came slowly to his door, a vague sense of new trouble was tugging at his heart, a doubt as to what he ought to do or say numbing his faculties. Pausing at the threshold, he heard Connie's voice, low, rich, tremulous with happiness, singing one of her mother's old dear songs, a thing she had not done since the

bitter day they followed the mother to her grave, and the instant he entered she came to throw her arms about his neck and raise her glowing face to his lips. He took it between his hands and looked down gravely, fondly, yet with such a world of trouble in his eyes. The song was hushed. Once more the color mounted to her temples, but the big, soft eyes never flinched nor faltered.

"Read that letter now, papa dear," she simply said. "I want you to read it." And then when he would not, but sank wearily in his chair, she went and fetched the letter she had placed upon his desk, and perched herself upon the arm of the chair and nestled her soft cheek against his weather-beaten jowl, and opened the note before his eyes, which in turn he promptly shut. Then she strove to pull them open by means of the lashes, and then he turned his head away.

"I don't want to read the letter, Con," he said, remorsefully. "I never meant to let our Little Mother think I——"

"Then I'll read it, papa," she began, interrupting him, whereat he clapped his hands to his ears. "Well, at least you must see the picture," she cried, and, jumping up, she ran to the mantel with a tintype, a likeness of a tall young fellow with a downy moustache, arrayed in cavalry scouting garb, with prairie belt and holster, a very presentable young dragoon, too, the second lieutenant of Manning's troop; but the eyes of the first lieutenant thereof looked less kindly on this counterfeit presentment than ever they had upon the face of the original.

"Where was it taken?" he asked, rather abruptly, feeling that he must say something.

"Mr. Thornton says an itinerant artist drove out from town and met them at the first camp and took quite a number and some groups. He had two of them taken just like this, to send home, and dropped the odd one in here, saying it was a philopœna and a bribe."

"Bribe? For what?" demanded Morgan. "Why should he bribe my little girl?"

"Oh, there was no need," she laughed, blithely. "He—they all, he said, wanted something your Connie was only too glad to get and give. Now you must read it and see for yourself, papa."

But he would not. He was ashamed of the fear that for a moment had possessed him, that she had consented to a correspondence with Thornton without once asking her father's counsel,—she, his little Connie, his first-born. True, she was older at fifteen than many town-bred girls at twenty, for her childhood had been nipped in the bud, and since those slender shoulders had borne the care and burden of woman for two long years, was it to be forbidden her to know aught of woman's glory? Only, had he been blind all the time? Day after day had Thornton been their visitor, yet never in all that time had the father seen or suspected in the young officer any more interest in Constance than he displayed in Lot or Billy. True, she was almost always a silent attendant at their daily game, or an absorbed listener to their talk, rarely leaving them except to go into the other room to moderate the clamor of the youngsters, who, being burly and aggressive, were too often involved in a game of give and take in which

they were fairly matched. But Thornton's manner to her, which was at first simply kindly and jovial, as it was to the other children, had certainly changed to greater deference as the winter wore on. Little by little he saw how her father leaned upon the girl, how thoughtful, how devoted she was. He had been reared a gentleman. He had a mother and sisters whom he dearly loved, and from earliest boyhood he had been taught by his soldier father the lesson of gentleness, courtesy, and consideration. From the other officers in the regiment, most of whom had known her in pinafores, her greeting was simply "Hello, Con!" or "Morning, Connie; how's dad to-day?" Thornton's impulse from the first when he met this tall slip of a girl in solemn black was to call her "Miss Morgan," which made her blush furiously. Later on, laughed at by the veteran sub., he had compromised on "Miss Connie," but not until he had been a daily visitor for several months had it come to "Connie." Morgan never knew how she had fled to her room and nearly cried her eyes out the morning the battalion marched away. It was after breakfast that Mrs. Woods had come for her and, with other ladies, had driven out to the butte south of the post, from whose side the Mini Ska could be traced for miles, but to whose summit Connie alone had been bold and active enough to climb. All he saw and realized now was that his darling had been pale and languid, plainly drooping for a while, and then all on a sudden, at the coming of that little note, sunshine, gladness, gratitude, joy, all had beamed from her speaking eyes, had bubbled from her girlish heart in song. He had mourned the mother's loss before, but it was as nothing compared with the helpless yearning that possessed him now. Who was there to counsel, who was there to take his beloved child to her heart, and with mother love and sympathy, with mother kiss and clasping arms, in the sure haven of mother's changeless love win from the virgin soul its cherished secret, then guide and guard and counsel as only mothers can?

Poor Morgan! He would not read the boy's frank letter. That might imply doubt of his little girl. He could not consult such friends as Mrs. Freeman; she had taken her babies and flitted away to the sea-shore for the summer. Mrs. Stannard, once his wife's kind friend and adviser, had gone long months before, when the major went to his new station. There were loving women, kind women, motherly women, at the post, yet not those to whom he could speak of anything so sacred. Neither could he bring himself to the faintest reference to the matter in talking with his child. There was simply one thing which he could do, thought Morgan. All the winter he had been growing fond and fonder of the bright-faced, glad-voiced, soldierly young fellow; but now, now, if it should transpire that all this time Thornton had been laying siege to Connie's innocent heart, he could hate him and in time crush and punish.

At noon the sergeant came to say the stores were boxed and ready for shipment. Would the lieutenant sign the invoices? Over at the adjutant's office the infantry bugler had just sounded mess and orderly call. The companies were going in to dinner, the noise and bustle around the barracks contrasting strongly with the silence and desertion

over there across the parade where stood the cavalry quarters. As Morgan came forth into the bright sunshine of the first June day, he noted how the snow-belt on the distant peak had lifted higher in the last forty-eight hours, and thought with a heavy sigh how care and trouble had sunk so much deeper around his heart. Major Rhett, of the infantry, temporary commander of the post, was standing by the sundial as Morgan and his sergeant came trudging along. One or two officers were with him. A telegraph message was in his hand, and he was looking strangely worried. All of the group ceased their talk and glanced at Morgan as he neared them.

"The ordnance stores are ready for shipment, major," said he. "The colonel will have a couple of wagons at Alkali Station to meet the freight to-night. We have billed it there."

"How far were they camped from Alkali last night, Mr. Morgan?"

"How far, sir? Well, they were on Bear Fork, probably fifteen miles north of west of Alkali. They camp to-night at Willow Springs, and to-morrow under Painted Lodge Buttes, and——"

"Yes, I know," interrupted the commander, "and it was at Willow Springs Major Graves was to meet and pay them, I believe?"

"So I heard, sir. Though at first I rather imagined they wouldn't be paid now until after next muster."

"Well, they won't. Graves was robbed at Minden Station, early this morning, of every dollar, and the robbers wore cavalry uniforms."

V.

Old Curran, the sutler,—for sutler he was long years before his designation was changed to post trader, and longer still before his occupation was wiped out entirely by the civilizing process which made bar-tenders of "blue-coats,"—old Curran had been losing money all winter, and was growling about it. He looked to the payment following the April muster to recoup him for his losses, as many a good soldier was deep in his books. The payment should have been made in May, but for some reason it was postponed, possibly in order that the paymaster might make the circuit of the cordon of posts in the bright weather of early June; but a pack of young rascals and malcontents at the Indian reservation had been turbulent all spring, and no sooner was the snow out of the Mini Ska valley than the cattle came after the budding grass and the Sioux came after the cattle. They were hungry, no doubt,—the Sioux sometimes are, despite the fact that they are excellent providers and know how to take care of themselves, and the difference between them and certain tractable and therefore systematically ill-treated tribes is, that when they are not given what they want they take it. Heaven helps those who help themselves, and in their dealings with the wards of the nation the United States of America have this resemblance to heaven. The Sioux helped themselves so liberally to cattle—and herders—this particular spring that Tintop, with six troops of his devoted regiment, was hurried forth to brush them out of the Mini Ska, and then to go

on and help some comrades four hundred miles away who were too few in number for the work in hand. To Curran's disgust, the battalion marched out leaving its score at the shop unsettled. Not that the soldiers could help it at all, but because they themselves were creditors who couldn't collect. Then, to Curran's delight, it was announced that Major Graves was sent out by rail to pay them before they got too far away. Curran rejoicingly set forth to meet him and be present at the ceremony, and thereby, doubtless, collect large portion of the dollars due him. Curran thoughtfully, too, loaded up a couple of wagons with pies, cakes, cheese, pickles, crackers, canned fruits, bottled beer, whiskey, and tobacco, lest the boys shouldn't know what to do with what remained of their money. This load he pushed forward on the heels of the command. Then his own fine team and spring-wagon were sent down the valley to Alkali Station, whither he proposed to follow by rail and meet the paymaster on his arrival, and to entertain him royally on the drive out to the Springs. It was estimated that the battalion, breaking camp on Bear Fork at 5.30 A.M., could unsaddle and pitch its tents at Willow Springs by noon. It was estimated that leaving Alkali, say at six A.M., after a hearty breakfast, the paymaster would be trundled away up the valley of the Dry Fork and be landed at the Springs, twenty-five miles north of the railway, in plenty of time to meet them, and Tintop was ordered to detach a sergeant and ten men to ride over to Alkali from their camp on Bear Fork to bivouac at the station over-night and escort the paymaster up the next day. Graves left department head-quarters on the westbound express, his clerk, his valise full of funds necessary for the payment of the battalion, and he himself, all comfortably ensconced in the Pullman car. They were due at Alkali at four A.M. They could retire early, have a good night's rest, and be called by the porter in plenty of time to be up and dressed and to enjoy a camp breakfast with their escort at the little station—a mere siding with some cattle chutes and pens—before starting on their drive.

Standing where Constance had stood on the summit of the high, precipitous butte that lay southwest of the fort, one could see the valley of the Mini Ska stretching away to the eastward a distance of nearly fifty miles. Then the stream seemed to bring up suddenly against a line of bluffs that turned it off to the northeast, and this general direction it followed another fifty miles. The land was low and undulating along the left bank, while on the right, between the stream and the bold line of bluffs to the south, there was barely room for the railway. Fordable here near the fort, the Mini Ska speedily deepened and widened and became sluggish in flow as it rolled out into the lowlands after its tumbling rush through the mountain-chain at the west. Every year since its establishment had a cavalry column marched away from Fort Ransom to straighten out matters between the Sioux and the settlers who were venturing too close to the reservation. The first year or two the trail led along the west bank, hugging the stream, but, as it was found that this was the longer, hotter, and dustier way, a new route was decided on, cutting across the big bend and winding along over the foot-hills of the range, from which several

streams of clear, cool water came pouring forth, speedily to become murky and turbid on reaching the broad plain below. The first day's march lay almost due east from Ransom and parallel with the Mini Ska, the next veered around towards the northeast, and camp was always made at Bear Fork. Not until the fourth camp at Painted Lodge did the trail and the stream again come together, and from that point down to the disputed territory, the pet raiding-ground of the restless "young men," the two were never far apart. West of Painted Lodge the Sioux did not often venture, though the broad bottom-land within this elbow of the Ska was a fine grazing-ground.

The railway, coming up from the southeast and over a high plateau, dropped down to the valley by means of a long, winding ravine scooped out for it by the Antelope, a little tributary that joined the Mini Ska just at the elbow, and here, at the point where the rail and the river after running parallel for eighty miles suddenly quit company, the line shooting eastward, the stream northeast,—here stood Alkali Station. Cattle-men had built a low bridge over the stream at this point, with the intention of making Alkali the shipping station for their beeves, and from this place a sandy road ran down the left bank to Painted Lodge Butte and away to the agencies. Once upon a time the mails were carried that way, and a stage ran twice a week between Alkali and the reservation, but when a rival railway sent a line across the Missouri and tapped the lands of the Dakotas far up to the northeast, the agency freight, mail, and passengers were sent around that way, and Alkali became a deserted village. There stood the old stage-house, the cattle-chutes, and the rickety dépôt, but no trains stopped there now except on signal, and the telegraph instrument and operator had been moved to Minden, some twenty-five miles farther west. Here, too, was a bridge over the Mini Ska and a cattle-shipping point. Here the ranchmen who did not care to take the extra twenty-five-mile gallop to Butteville had all their mail addressed, and Minden speedily assumed the mild and modest importance which Alkali had lost.

And it was at Minden, said Major Rhett, that the paymaster was robbed that morning soon after dawn, and robbed by men in cavalry overcoats. Morgan listened a moment, simply stunned.

"When did the news come in, sir?" asked he of the major.

"Ten minutes ago, as soon as they could repair the wires which were cut. The sheriff is on his way out here now."

"Where is the paymaster?"

"They're coming up on a freight from Minden this afternoon, he and his clerk."

"But—I don't understand," said Morgan: "how on earth did he get to Minden? Why did he come so far west? The escort was to meet him at Alkali, so I was told."

"That's just what nobody understands, and what he'll explain later, I presume."

An orderly came hastily from the direction of the office, and, halting, saluted the post commander.

"The sergeant-major says they were assigned to C Company, sir, for rations."

There was an awkward silence a moment. Finally the commander wheeled on Morgan:

"You've known those couriers some time, haven't you, Mr. Morgan? What is their reputation?"

"Our men, sir? Schultz and Schramm, do you mean? Why, major, the sergeant is one of our veterans, a man we all trust. Schramm is not a year with us yet, but he's as good as they make 'em, I think, in Germany. Surely they are not suspected? They came in with orders and despatches."

"Very true, but they passed within sight of Minden if they came back by the trail, and through it if they followed the stage road. They may have seen or heard something. At all events, I wish to question them," was the major's answer. "What time did they reach the post, Mr. Adjutant?"

"Just at guard-mounting, sir."

Rhett pondered a moment. "The colonel's note says he was aroused at midnight by couriers from the agency who had had a hard ride and could go no farther. But for his orders to meet the paymaster at Willow Springs to-day, he says, he would have pushed on to Painted Lodge,—made a forty-mile march. It really looks very threatening down the valley, and now that the money's gone and the paymaster can't reach him I'm in hopes he will push ahead. Already people are wiring out here from town, asking whether the Indian rumors are true. They've got a story there that ten people were killed yesterday."

"Yes, sir," put in the adjutant; "our market-man brought it out here an hour ago. It's going all over the post. They say in town one reason there's no chance of catching these robbers is that the cavalry has been ordered to come on with all speed, and that a courier rode out to them from Minden before daybreak this morning. Despatches were sent them before the line was cut."

Away on the winding road to the southwest towards the distant frontier town a couple of wagons could be seen slowly moving towards the post. Beyond them little dust-clouds, rapidly sailing over the plain, told where fleeter horsemen were speeding. The men coming out from their dinner were gathering in groups on the verandas, chatting in low tones and watching the group of officers. Presently the orderly came hurrying back alone.

"What orders did you give those couriers, Mr. Wood?"

"Nothing especial, sir. Schultz asked if they were at liberty to start back as soon as they wished, and I said yes."

"Then they must be taking a nap," said the major. "What with being up most of last night and having to ride all to-night, they need it. Their consciences are clear if they can sleep all the morning."

The orderly reached them as the major concluded, halted half a dozen paces away, and reported:

"Sergeant Shea says the couriers left nearly an hour ago, sir."

"Left an hour ago! Which way?"

"He doesn't know, sir. Private Burns says he saw them ride away after the quartermaster's corral at 11.30,—going towards town."

VI.

It was one o'clock that afternoon before the sheriff reached the post. Butteville, the thriving county seat, lay just five miles away to the southwest, and a hard prairie road connected it with the post. As a distributing point to the mines and a market for the ranchmen the growing town had shot rapidly into importance. Two banks, both reliable, two hotels, well patronized, and shops and stores in good number, were barely able to supply the demands. Dozens of bustling men breakfasted every morning at the big eating-house of the railway company, where the west-bound express was supposed to find ample sustenance for its passengers before pushing on for the long day's run through the mountains. The sheriff and the coroner, as was the case in most frontier cities of the day, were by long odds the hardest-worked officials, and just now the sheriff was fairly used up. The first intimation of anything wrong east of Butteville was the sudden stop of the wires. Up to daybreak train-despatchers and night operators sitting, red-eyed and weary, over their instruments, after the long hours of vigil, found everything working smoothly. The night had been still, neither storm nor excitement anywhere along the line, until just about four o'clock Butte, called up by Pawnee Station, was asked, "What's afire at Alkali?" Butte didn't know,—hadn't heard. Pawnee explained that a despatch for Paymaster Graves from Minden met No. 3 at Pawnee, and said bridge was down at Alkali. Two ranchmen from over Painted Lodge way rode into Pawnee at three A.M. and said hell was broke loose down the Mini Ska,—Sioux scalping and burning everything in sight. Where were Colonel Winthrop and the cavalry? Butte answered: The colonel and six companies had marched for Painted Lodge two days before, couldn't be far from Alkali now. Sioux wouldn't dare come that far up the valley. Who said the bridge was down and burnt? Pawnee replied: Hold on a minute. More refugees from valley are reported hurrying to the railway, and Pawnee wanted to see the ranchmen who first came before they got good and drunk and couldn't talk reliably. Perhaps Minden could tell about the bridge at Alkali. Butte called Minden accordingly. Minden said some of the cavalry had come up from Alkali an hour before, said they'd been sent to Alkali in the first place to meet the Paymaster on No. 3, but they found the bridge across the Mini Ska afire, so the ambulance, escort, etc., were all on the way up to Minden, and these two rode ahead with a despatch for Major Graves, explaining the situation and telling him to keep on and meet them here. Minden sent it to Pawnee, and Pawnee gave it to the porter of the sleeping-car. That's all Minden knew about fire or anything else. Butteville was the west end of the division, however, and Butteville demanded further particulars,—told Minden to ask the cavalry if any of the buildings at Alkali were reported afire. Minden said wait a minute, he'd find out: No. 3's head-light just coming around Buffalo Bluff. The soldiers had gone out to meet the lieutenant as soon as assured that the despatch had been delivered to No. 3, and they were now watering their horses at the creek. It was just light enough to see them out

there. Then No. 3 reached Minden, was duly reported in and out, and then the wires went down. No. 3 came into Butteville at breakfast on time and all right. The division superintendent asked what was the matter at Alkali Station, and the conductor replied, nothing that he knew of. They had come lively down Antelope grade and struck the Mini Ska valley, running forty-five miles an hour, which they didn't check, as Major Graves's telegram said, "Come on to Minden." Had he seen the despatch? Why, certainly. It was all right, signed by some lieutenant or other, commanding escort. Had he seen no fire at Alkali? Oh, yes, over on the bank of the stream five hundred yards or so from the station there was some fire. Thought it was only a camp-fire or two. There were two or three men, soldiers, he thought, on the old platform, but it was barely dawn, and the engine left such a trail of smoke and steam that the men were enveloped in it, and he couldn't make them out distinctly. No. 3 dropped the major and his clerk at Minden, where other soldiers met him, and then hurried on. "What's the trouble?" "Well," said the superintendent, "since the moment you pulled out from Minden to this moment, Mr. Hart, we have been cut off. Not a word can we get from the east."

By the time the express pushed on for the west again a couple of hand-cars had been despatched eastward in the vain hope of finding the break near town, and these were overhauled ten miles out by the engine and caboose sent scouting down the valley. Not until they were within a mile of Minden did they find the gap, and along there the wires had been clipped in half a dozen places. The superintendent gathered the particulars while his men were patching. Here at the station, surrounded by a knot of excited ranchmen and settlers, were Major Graves and his clerk, but all they had to show was the telegram. It read plainly enough:

"Minden Station, June 3, 3.05 A.M. Major Graves, U. S. Army, on No. 3, Pawnee Station. Bridge down at Alkali. Cannot cross Mini Ska. Come on to Minden: escort meet you there.

"EDWARDS, *Lieutenant Commanding.*"

Never suspecting anything wrong, Major Graves sent his clerk to notify the conductor and show him the despatch. The porter made them coffee and a light breakfast at the *buffet*, so as to enable them to start at once for the longer ride that their going on to Minden would necessitate. They were met as they jumped off the car by a couple of troopers in overcoats, thimble-belts, and the slouch-hat then much affected by the cavalry on campaigns. "This way, sir," said one: "the lieutenant says the escort's ready to start the moment the major is." He made a move to take the valise, but instinctively the major held on. The train pulled out as they stepped around to the rear of the dépôt. Graves could see a little knot of horsemen close to the stream. "The boys will be glad to see you, sir, and we've a long ride ahead of us," said his conductor, and in another moment Graves was tripped, thrown heavily to the ground, bound, and gagged, and there he lay helpless, while his clerk was similarly handled, and away went

the valise with its precious thousands, he had no idea whither. He saw only three or four men in all, but they were all in cavalry overcoats, and the horses and equipments, so far as he could judge in the light and distance, looked like those of the regulars,—not cowboys or road-agents. They vanished in the twinkling of an eye, and not until they had been gone fifteen minutes or more did the station agent discover the plight of the paymaster and release him. Meantime, the wires had been cut. Pursuit was useless. No one knew who the robbers were, or which way they had gone after crossing the bridge. But an early bird around the station said he saw two soldiers galloping west along the north bank of the stream, and all Minden—what there was of it—was ready to swear that soldiers were at the bottom of the whole affair.

It was ten o'clock before they could send a despatch to Butte. It was barely 4.45 when the robbery took place. It was noon, as we have seen, when the news reached the fort, and one o'clock when the sheriff got there.

"Cowboys! Road-agents!" said he, indignantly. "No, sir. We hung the last of them two months ago. There isn't a road-agent left in Latimer County. Those robbers were soldiers,—cavalrymen, deserters from Colonel Winthrop's command. Fisk, the operator at Minden, will swear to their identity, at least of the two who came in with the despatch. Of course he sent it when he saw Lieutenant Edwards's name signed and they told him so straight a story. You send couriers after Colonel Winthrop, find out who are absent from the battalion, and you'll know who your robbers are. Then I can do something."

"Did you pass any of our men on your way out from town?" asked Rhett, after a moment's pause.

"Your men? Soldiers? Nothing but the ordnance sergeant and some wagons. Who were they, and where'd they go?"

"I don't know that they did go—that way, at least. Two couriers came with despatches this morning from Colonel Winthrop and left at 11.30 to rejoin him. Some one said they didn't go east, however, but struck out for town."

"What were their names? What were they like?" asked the sheriff, eagerly.

"They are two of our best men," answered the major. "Mr. Morgan, here, knows them well. They are Germans,—about the last men likely to become highway-robbers."

"Humph! I'd stake my commission on their innocence," said Morgan, briefly.

"Oh, of course all men are innocent until proved guilty," said the sheriff, crushingly. "All the same it's my business to look after them. You say they went to town instead of back on the trail of the battalion, major?"

"I did not," was the major's chilling reply. "I said somebody else said that they had struck out for town. Very possibly they had business there; and they were not under my jurisdiction, anyhow."

"No; they're under mine," said the sheriff. "Men need funds, as a

rule, to transact business in Butte, and soldiers without money have little business so far off their track. If they have money when their comrades haven't, where'd they get it?"

"Well, Schultz, the sergeant, has been in service some twenty years, and is reported to have saved up much more money than I ever hope or expect to," said Rhett. "I presume his bank-account can be ascertained at the First National. Schramm, the other, isn't a year in service."

"Schramm?" exclaimed the sheriff. "A good-looking, blue-eyed little Dutchman?"

"A good-looking, blue-eyed, medium-sized, slender young German, if you like, Mr. Sheriff," said Morgan. "What have you to say about him?"

"Oh, I'm saying nothing. I want you gentlemen to talk. That young fellow gets nearly thirteen dollars a month, doesn't he, major?"

"Well, rather less than that, Mr. Sheriff."

"Does he own a mine or a faro-bank hereabouts, or is he in cahoots with Curran?" asked the civilian.

"If he is, he's a dead loser this time," said the post adjutant, shortly,—he being a young officer deeply imbued with the proper idea of deference to a commanding officer and resentful of civilian impertinence, even on the part of a sheriff. "Old Curran was at Alkali waiting for first pick at the paymaster's dollars. Now his beggars on horseback are off for six months' service against the Sioux, and he'll lose most of their accounts."

"So he has no means outside of his pay, this young Deutscher? Well, that's what I wanted to know."

"Fortunes outside of the pay are not often to be found in the army," answered the major. "What makes you think Schramm has one?"

"Oh, I don't," said the sheriff. "But I believe he has more money than he can easily account for, and the sooner he is overhauled the quicker we'll know something of this morning's work." And with that the sheriff whirled his cayuse about, and, giving him a touch with the quirt, went bounding lightly away to the corrals.

"That fellow's a brute," said Mr. Woods, presently. "You don't suppose he really suspects Schramm, do you, Morgan?" But Morgan, gripping his stick, was already trudging angrily away.

That night the paymaster himself arrived at Fort Ransom, leaving his faithful clerk in conference with the officials in town. Graves was soon the centre of an eager gathering at Rhett's quarters. By this time, too, Curran was back, coming up on the afternoon freight. He had gone down to Alkali by the east-bound express the previous evening. The escort was already there, bivouacked for the night at the edge of the stream. They were up betimes and had a hot breakfast all ready for Graves, and were surprised to see the train shoot past instead of stopping to let him off. Not until the engine sent out from Butte came steaming down at noon did they know what had taken place at Minden. Then there was nothing left him but to return by the first opportunity. The sergeant and detachment remained awaiting orders,

as the paymaster might draw funds from the bank at Butte and come on again. Just as he was leaving on the afternoon freight a courier came to Alkali with orders for the sergeant, and the messenger said that the battalion had reached Willow Springs and was surprised to find no paymaster there. News from the lower valley was so threatening that Colonel Winthrop had determined, after resting a couple of hours, to push on for Painted Lodge, upon the supposition that the paymaster had missed No. 3. The escort was ordered to wait for him until next train from the east, and then, whether he came or not, to rejoin the battalion by the shortest route, following down the left bank, and bringing the extra ammunition shipped from Ransom.

Curran was utterly disgusted with the whole affair. "Ten chances to one," said he, "them fellows will never come back to the post, and I'll never get a cint of me money." Curran, as the party most interested, was persistent in his cross-questioning of the major, who was eager enough to explain, but not to Curran. In brief, he said he had brought in that sole-leather valise nearly twelve thousand dollars with which to pay Winthrop's command. The rest of his funds, sealed in his little iron safe, were turned over to the express company to be forwarded to Butte, two days later on, by which time he had expected to return to pay the infantry at the fort and then go on to the outlying posts to the northwest. By evening, too, Rhett had received telegraphic orders to hold his little battalion of foot in readiness to take train to Pawnee and thence march across the range to the lower Mini Ska. Although exaggerated, the reports of rapine and murder were only too true. The Sioux were indeed at their devilish work. In the subdued bustle of preparation the paymaster's excitement and distress of mind created less sympathy than would ordinarily have been the case. Eagerly he was showing his despatch to officer after officer, and asking whether any one would not have acted just as he did under the circumstances and on receipt of so genuine a message, and gentlemen who under other circumstances would unhesitatingly have said yes were now disposed to be a bit conservative, to look judicial and suggest inquiries. Wouldn't it have been better to stop the train at Alkali and see if the report were true? The bridge was only half a mile from the station, and somebody would have been sure to know. These are times when everybody's backsight is so much better than his foresight. Everybody could see with half an eye that had the paymaster caused the conductor to stop the train at Alkali some of the escort would have been on the platform to meet him, and they would have told him that there was nothing in the world the matter with the bridge, that the whole thing was a plant. But Graves pointed out that he didn't own the road and couldn't make the train stop unless he meant to get off, which he didn't. Lieutenant Edwards had wired him to come on to Minden. Everybody knew Edwards. He had escorted Graves on the winter trip to the Black Hills cantonment. It was most natural Edwards should have been selected to escort him this time. He was with the battalion, first lieutenant of Captain Frank Amory's troop. True, as matters turned out, Edwards had not been sent at all. Old Sergeant Daly, with eight troopers, was considered

amply sufficient. Of course it was a plant, a most successful plant, and more than likely, said the paymaster, somebody closely connected with the cavalry had engineered the whole scheme. Everybody knew there were some very shady characters among the men enlisting during the Centennial year. Everybody knew what train would fetch him out from department head-quarters. The plotters would not wire in time to admit of his making inquiries, but waited until the last moment, then, dressed and equipped as the cavalry were dressed and equipped, they had sent two of their number in to Minden Station with a despatch signed by an officer whom they reported a mile or two behind, coming up with the wagon and main body. Everything looked straight to the operator, and so it was sent to Pawnee and there handed to the Pullman porter. What could have been more complete? The troopers who met him at the platform addressed him confidently and respectfully, saluting exactly like old soldiers. Of course he hadn't a personal acquaintance with the entire regiment, but this he would say and did say, that he believed Mr. Lacy, his clerk, was willing to swear that the two men who met him at Minden were *bona fide* members of the Eleventh Cavalry; Mr. Lacy had seen them before, and could identify them if he were to see them again. The sheriff's people were already working on the clue.

It was nearly tattoo that evening when Morgan left the major's and went slowly homeward. Voices in eager conversation were audible in the kitchen as he entered, then became as suddenly still and the door was quickly closed. It was his custom to go to the children's room and kiss and pet them a little after Connie had prompted them through their prayers,—devotions over which, in their infantile depravity, they were far more apt to fall asleep than during the subsequent ceremony. But the sounds from aloft as he entered were those of lively contention rather than adoration, lively controversy rather than the lisping prayers of childish lips. Lot and Billy were still up and astir, it was evident, and so engrossed in their tilt that the father's slow coming up the creaking stairway failed to divert their attention. Halting at the door and looking in, the veteran trooper enjoyed a *coup-d'œil* of the scene. Perched on the bed in the bifurcated vestment of canton flannel referred to as his "nighties" was the burly son and heir, barefooted, flushed, truculent, bouncing up and down on the bed-springs as he conversed with his sister, who, equally flushed, if a trifle less confident in mien, and just about half undressed, was standing with one of her spring-heeled, buttoned boots in hand, half concealed, half disclosed, as though she lacked determination to hurl it after its mate, now reposing on top of the bureau beyond the bed, surrounded by the wreck of a glass toilet-set, once their mother's,—Aunt Lottie's one present to her army sister.

"I don't care," said Lot, sturdily; "you did it."

"Oh, you're worse'n Annanice Afire! I didn't!"

"You did, too! and you shan't call names."

"I shall if you 'cuse me again," said Billy, stoutly. "You fired that shoe at me when I wasn't even lookin' at dolly, and it smashed everything."

"I don't care," reiterated Lot: "it was all your fault. It never would have hit 'em at all if—if you hadn't dodged. So there!" And then Lot, triumphant, turned, saw her father's grave face, and lost her nerve. Running to him, she burst into tears, whereupon Billy began to whimper sympathetically.

"Hush, Lottie. Never mind who did it now," said Morgan, taking her in his arms. "Hush, child. We'll settle that some other time. Where's Connie? Where was she when this happened?"

"Mammy called her to the kitchen. Sergeant Hinkel's wife comed," sobbed Lottie, "and she told Billy not to step on my dolly, and he—he—just danced it off the bed a purpose, and I—and I——" and here the sobs overmastered her, and Billy came tumbling off his perch in dire dismay. And this was the situation when Connie's low voice and fleet footsteps were heard on the stairway, and Little Mother came hurrying in. One glance told her what had happened. She flew around the bed to the bureau.

"Oh, Lottie, Lottie, how could you?" she cried. "Our dear mother's set,—Aunt Lottie's present!"

"Never mind, Connie, never mind it now, dear. She wasn't aiming at it," said paterfamilias, with his patient smile.

"She was aimin' at me!" burst in Billy, whose distress at sight of Lottie's grief was suddenly tempered by the prospect of her getting off scot-free, as was too often the case when the father administered justice, "and then she said I did it 'cause I dodged."

"Well, he called me names," sobbed Lottie,—"said I was worse'n Annanice Afire."

"What on earth is Annanice Afire?" asked Morgan blankly of his eldest.

"Nothing, father dear. I read them the story of Ananias and Sapphira when Billy told a story the other day. Let me undress Lottie, now.—Come, child."

But Morgan noticed instantly how nervous and flurried was her manner, how tremulous and cold her hand. His little Connie, his big tall Connie now, so tenderly, so fondly loved. Not until the little ones had forgotten their squabble, had begged each other's forgiveness at Connie's knee and cried themselves blissfully to sleep, did the father see her again. She seemed to busy herself a long time aloft instead of coming down to his den. Meantime, Fenton, officer of the day, came hurriedly in:

"Here's the latest, Morgan. Schultz and Schramm took dinner together at Conway's restaurant, leaving their horses at the Empire stable, and didn't start until nearly three o'clock. The sheriff has sent a posse after them. He claims that Lacy's description of the robbers fits them both."

"Blatherskite!" said Morgan.

"Well, that isn't all. Rhett's got a despatch from the chief. We go at daybreak. Special train. You'll be K.O. here to-morrow. The despatch from Pawnee says ranchmen report an officer and his orderly killed and scalped not twenty miles from Painted Lodge. Better come over to the office awhile."

"I'll be there in a minute," said Morgan, rising stiffly. "Connie!" he called at the foot of the stairs. "Connie!"

No answer. Slowly, wonderingly, he climbed the little stairs. Her door was open, the room dark; the night-lamp burning dimly in the children's room threw but a faint beam through the connecting door-way. Groping in, he became aware of something dark upon Connie's white bed. It was his child, her head between the pillows as though to shut out every sound.

"Constance!" he exclaimed, distressed, dismayed. She started up, her hands clasped to her temples. Then, as though overwhelmed with the realization of some haunting dread, she bowed her face upon his arm, quivering from head to foot, and with one low moan of "Papa,"—the old baby name seeming to come most readily to her lips,—"Papa, they've killed him!"—sank back upon the pillow.

VII.

The doctor was needed for Constance that night, and Mrs. Fenton and Mrs. Woods, loving women both, came in to minister to her, so utterly was she unnerved, unstrung. Morgan knew not what to say or think. It was no time now to ask to see the letter she had begged him to read. It was no time to torture her with inquiry as to why the belief in Thornton's death should so utterly prostrate her, even were the belief itself justifiable,—which he did not at all concede. Ranchmen reported an officer and his orderly killed in the Mini Ska valley far to the north of Pawnee Station that evening about dusk. Ranchmen were proverbially sensational. Even if an officer had been killed, why should it be Thornton? True, Winthrop's was the only command in the valley at the moment. True, the Indians knew of their coming, for what movement of troops did they not know all about as soon as the troops themselves? If an officer had been killed, it very possibly was one of the Eleventh. From the landing at the head of the stairs Constance had heard the abrupt announcement of Captain Fenton, and, waiting for no explanation, had rushed to her bed. Why should she believe Thornton to have been the victim? And, even if he were, why should it so affect her?—the apple of his eye, his loving, winsome, loyal Connie, his "Little Mother," as he had so long called her? Morgan wrung his hands in distress and perplexity.

The doctor came in after his brief examination.

"The child has been running down all winter," he said. "She is in a low, nervous condition, the natural result of the long strain. She has had a woman's cares on a child's shoulders, Morgan, and any shock was likely to upset her. The sudden news that one of her friends was killed was quite enough to floor a stronger woman, let alone Connie. We'll have her up again in a day or two; but she ought to have rest and change."

Rest and change! how glibly the words fall! How leaden they light on the ear of husband and father impoverished in the service and bound to the wheel! How was he to offer rest and change to any of

his brood? If rest and change could have saved the life of his beloved wife, how could he have won it for her?

"I've given Constance soothing medicine. Better not disturb her to-night," said the doctor, as he left: so Morgan ventured not to bend over his sleeping child, fearful of breaking the spell. Yet at dawn, when the little battalion of foot marched off to Butte, she was up and at the window, importuning him for latest news from the front. Hours that morning he had to be at the office, for despatches were coming in thick and fast, ordering ordnance stores and ammunition sent hither and yon, and up to noon nothing whatever was heard from Winthrop's command, and the big eyes that questioned him, when he came to kiss Connie's white forehead, were rimmed with mourning circles, as though already she believed him gone and for him mutely wore her weeds. At three P.M. came a despatch from Rhett, six miles out from Pawnee, *en route* for the Mini Ska, dated at twelve: "Report of killing of officer and orderly untrue. Lieutenant Thornton's horse accidentally shot while scouting. No other casualties heard of. Winthrop reported forty miles northeast of Painted Lodge already."

Morgan took this over home at once. Mrs. Woods, bonny little army wife and mother that she was, came from Connie's room, and to her he gave the message. He would not permit any one to think he supposed his child could be, at her tender age, unduly interested in the fate of any man. Yet he found himself listening at the foot of the stairs. Would she cry out in relief and joy? No; whatsoever she might have betrayed to him, Constance was on her guard now. She was her mother's daughter for "pure grit," said he.

"Connie is so glad it wasn't true," called Mrs. Woods, tossing the brown paper down the stairs. "She wants to know when you are coming up to see her?"

"After a while," answered he. "I must go to the storehouse first." He hastened to his stock of arms and munitions of war, thinking little of them, it must be owned,—thinking little of anything just now but Connie. Not yet sixteen, an innocent, ignorant, garrison-bred girl, yet so like her mother in her own girlhood, so gentle, unselfish, thoughtful for others; could it be that all unsought she should have given her girlish heart to the bright-eyed, merry young fellow who had so suddenly left them, and that it was known—noted by others? If not, why should Rhett have taken all the trouble to send that message telling of Thornton's safety? Sorrow, trial, trouble of nearly every kind had come to him during the last year or so, but this was something so utterly unlooked for. What could he do? What should he do?

At the storehouse, the ordnance sergeant, aided by one or two semi-invalided troopers, was packing cavalry equipments to be sent to a distant command. The glad June sunshine was pouring in at the open door-way, and the mountain breeze was fresh and bracing. The men were chatting in low tones over their work, and the talk was only of the robbery. Graves was in town, in consultation with the civil authorities. The local morning paper had but two topics to discuss, the Indian outbreak and the robbery. It had but one theory: the Indians were the malefactors in the first case, and the soldiers in the second.

That cowboys or settlers, ranchmen or road-agents, could be the real culprits was not for an instant to be believed. Two soldiers closely answering the description given by Mr. Lacy, the paymaster's clerk, had been in town for several hours the previous day, patronizing stables, saloons, and restaurants, and liberally supplied with money, had ridden away as soon as details of the robbery were being circulated about the streets, and they were now "at large,"—that expressive term which is used by the press when it desires to imply that the party enjoying his constitutional rights is probably a fugitive from justice. The sheriff, with efficient "posses," was scouring the country in pursuit. Officials at the fort, professing to doubt the evidence laid before them, had refused to co-operate with the civil authorities in securing their arrest, and had insisted that the men were merely returning on the trail of Colonel Winthrop's command. Morgan had read many a screed in similar strain. It was what his own men were saying that aroused him to sudden interest.

"Who was that red-headed chap was out here last night asking to know where was Schramm's trunk?" inquired Private Geohegan of his comrade.

"Oh, he's wan of the sheriff's gang. I misremember his name. Sure the quartermaster-sergeant told him Schramm carried his trunk, like the elephants, on the end of his nose. But he said he knew he'd left a box or trunk in somebody's care,—Mrs. Hinkel's, I think, or the wife of some of the sergeants. He was nosing around the landresses' quarters half the evening."

"Was he? Did he get anything?"

"He did. He got some important information. Mrs. Clancy tould him she'd black his eye for him if he stuck his red head inside the door, and while she was entertaining the gentleman Mrs. Hinkel ran up to the post with a box, and when she came back the feller was talking about a search-warrant. It's little of Schramm's they'd find at ould Hinkel's now. She's took it up to the officers' quarters, whatever it is."

And then Morgan remembered the eager voice in his kitchen the night before, and Lot's announcement that it was Mrs. Hinkel who begged to see Constance, and a new light flashed across his mind, a new shadow fell athwart his path. What if the authorities were now to ask him where Schramm's effects were hidden? What if they should demand the right to examine them? Morgan was no longer simply a subaltern officer, he was the commander, *pro tem.*, of the big and important post of Fort Ransom, and bound by every consideration to act in conjunction with the civil officials in the enforcement of law and in the aid of civil process.

Even as he was pondering over the matter, a horseman appeared in the broad glare of the sunshine on the bare open space in front.

"I'm looking for the post commander," said he, and handed him a telegram. Morgan mechanically unfolded it and read:

"To the Sheriff, Latimer County, Butteville. Commanding officer Fort Ransom instructed to give every assistance in his power. You will be allowed to make all proper search."

This was signed by the adjutant-general of the department, and

was presently supplemented by another which the operator at the post handed in. He was in conversation with the deputy sheriff at the moment, and, excusing himself, Morgan opened and read:

"Commanding Officer, Fort Ransom. Civil authorities report they are hampered in search for money stolen from Paymaster Graves. Render every assistance and allow all proper investigation."

"Do you mean that your people think any of this money is hidden here at this post?" he queried.

"Well, sir, that's what some of 'em say. Two of our officers will be out here in a moment. I rode ahead while they were jogging along in their buggy. They were here last night, and Mrs. Hinkel was seen toting a box up into the post just as soon as she heard they were inquiring for her shanty."

Morgan turned away. Far out across the winding ribbon of the road, twisting and twining over the rolling surface of the prairie, he could see the black dots in the light dust-cloud that told of the rapid approach of the officers of the law. Officially he had no knowledge of the whereabouts of that box, nor even of its existence; personally he had now every reason to believe that it was secreted under his own roof. Confident of Schramm's innocence, he had faith that nothing criminating could be found in Schramm's belongings. But suppose that the box contained papers,—personal and family documents which dealt with nobody's business but his own. What right had they to turn his letters inside out, possess themselves of his secrets, and parade them in the columns of the press, as paraded they certainly would be? It was an embarrassing question.

"What gave rise to the suspicion that Schramm had left valuables in the hands of Mrs. Hinkel?" he asked.

"Oh, that was easy to find out," answered the civilian. "All the soldiers, all the laundresses, were full of information about Schramm, and the mere fact that he held aloof from all but a few of their number was sufficient to make them suspicious of those with whom he did associate. Mrs. Hinkel and Mrs. Schultz were sisters, I am told, and Schultz and Schramm became very friendly. Schramm, it appears, spent many an evening at Hinkel's, and took a box there when the battalion was packing for the field, and went there with a small bundle the moment he got in from the front, the morning of the robbery. Now we know just what those two men did in town, and what we want to find out is what they did out here, what that packet was and what became of it. To-morrow we expect to have the men themselves."

"You do? Where?"

"Oh, well, down the Ska somewhere. They doubtless think that the safest route. You see, they couldn't go in any other direction without their being headed off and its being open admission of their guilt. Possibly they mean to catch the regiment, go through the campaign with it, and by and by, when the thing has blown over, pull out the money that they've hidden hereabouts, and have a good time. We have two parties out after them now: one, to head them off, went down to Pawnee by rail and rode north from there; the other follows their trail. I suppose you know we found the valise?"

"No. Where?"

"On the north bank of the river, not more than a mile west of Minden, sliced open with a bowie and rifled of whatever paper money there was in it originally. Nothing else was taken, so the paymaster and clerk say. They even left the nickels and dimes. Evidently they were in a big hurry."

Morgan's sad eyes wandered again over the prairie. The buggy was not a mile away, and another was following. If he could only see Mrs. Hinkel a moment before the inquisitors came. "Sudsville," that bustling suburb of the army post of those days, nestled along under the bank of a little tributary of the Mini Ska, while the cavalry stables and corrals occupied the broad low ground that skirted the stream itself on the southward side of the garrison. He had known the woman for years. She was an honest, sturdy, stout-hearted "frau," devoted to her husband, the Hanoverian sergeant, and proud of her brother-in-law, the Prussian Schultz, whose wife had died some years before. She held herself above the run of the colony of soldiers' wives, therefore they were not as ready to lie for as against her. Nevertheless, she had won even their respect; but the gabble of the laundresses' quarters had been amply sufficient to direct the scrutiny of the officials to her doors. Schramm, who left the box with her when the battalion marched, had left also a small package with her the morning he and Schultz rode in. Where were box and packet, and what did they contain? That was what the sheriff was determined to find out, and so certain was he of being on the trail of the robbers that he had bidden Graves and his clerk to follow and identify the money that might be recovered. When Morgan saw the occupants of the second buggy, as they drove in by the south gate, he went straight to his quarters.

"Is Constance asleep?" he asked of Mrs. Woods, as she met him at the stairs.

"No; she's awake, and anxious to see you," was the answer.

Still undetermined what to do, the father slowly climbed the steep stairway. Oh, how fondly and trustfully the big eyes beamed upon him, as he tiptoed in! Already his child was looking better, almost happy. She stretched forth her arms as he bent to kiss her.

"Dear old daddy! All the worry seems to come to you now, and Connie's forbidden to get up and help you. Is there any further news —of the robbery, I mean?"

"Yes." Then he paused a moment. "Constance, dear, the civil authorities claim that they know the robbers,—that they are of our regiment and that we are shielding them. The general orders me to aid in the search. They say Mrs. Hinkel had a box which belonged to Schramm and contains now some of the stolen money. What box did she bring you last night?"

"Schramm's box, father, and begged me not to let it go. It contains no stolen money. It holds papers and personal——" But he interrupted her.

"No matter what it may hold, we cannot hold it now. I do not blame Mrs. Hinkel for fetching it to you, but I must have it and the key."

"The box is in the lower drawer of the bureau, father. I have no key at all; Schramm has that. I did not tell you, because we knew that if you were questioned about it you would have to tell the truth, and then poor Schramm's letters would be no longer sacred."

"They shall touch none of his letters if I can help it," said Morgan, "but they must be allowed to examine for themselves."

A quarter of an hour later, in the office of the commanding officer were Graves and his clerk, the sheriff and a deputy, Morgan and the post surgeon, the latter officer having been summoned at Morgan's request. On the table was a stout sole-leather case about two feet long and six inches deep, shaped something like a despatch-box, something like a valise. It was evidently of foreign make, strong, durable, yet showing signs of service and wear. Such name as had originally been painted on its end was long since carefully scraped and painted out. In addition to its straps, a strong brass clasp and padlock secured it.

"It seems a pity to burst such a lock and spoil such a case," said the doctor, gravely. "I suppose you gentlemen feel that it must be done?"

"Oh, I never had a straighter tip in my life," said the sheriff. "I am betting on finding important evidence right here, if not the swag itself."

A soldier entered with some tools.

"One moment now, gentlemen," said Morgan. "This box is the property of a comparatively new soldier of ours. I believe he occupied higher station abroad than here. If money be found herein, well and good, I've nothing to say; but I protest against any prying into his personal secrets. This isn't Russia."

But the very first thing lifted out of the leathern box, as, its clasp shattered, it lay open before their eyes, was a long, official envelope. The sheriff tore it open, and therein lay ten fifty-dollar bills, national currency, crisp and new.

"My God!" exclaimed Lacy, pale with excitement. "I believe I could almost swear that those are some of the very bills we drew from the First National."

"Do you ordinarily pay enlisted men in fifty-dollar bills, Mr. Lacy?" asked Morgan.

"Certainly not," was the prompt reply. "There were over twenty officers with Colonel Winthrop's battalion: so we brought a thousand in one-hundreds and two thousand in fifties." And Lacy counted the bills over again with trembling fingers. The sheriff's big red hands were dragging out other packets now, bundle after bundle of letters, old, faded, and stained, several little books in German, three or four parcels wrapped in silk, each of which, when unrolled, proved to contain portraits. One of a soldierly, gray-moustached man of fifty-five or thereabouts, in the conventional broad-breasted undress uniform of the German army. Another,—on ivory, this, and in costly frame,—a painting of a lovely face with deep blue eyes and a fond, tender smile about the lips,—a mother face, which appeared again, with more of silver and less of gold in the curling hair that framed it, in two or three photographs. There was a photograph, too, of a stalwart young

lieutenant in the dress of the Uhlans. Another, a boy not more than eighteen or nineteen, in the uniform of the foot-guards, with the iron cross on his breast. There was a sword-knot or two, and then some documents, closely written in German, filed, docketed, and trimly wrapped, and these, one after another, the sheriff was searching through and swearing over because he couldn't understand them, when again Morgan interposed:

"There's no more money there, Mr. Sheriff. Surely there's no reason for prying into the man's family affairs. When the arrest is made that will be time enough. You've got what money there is. Kindly give me a memorandum receipt for that, and then seal the case up again. I say again, I'm ready to bet anything both Schultz and Schramm will be able to account for every moment and every dollar. All you have to do now is to get them, which your deputies can effect as soon as they reach the regiment."

And, seeing how much Morgan seemed to take the matter to heart and that the officers evidently agreed with him, the sheriff finally consented:

"All right; only we've got to take this with us. We ought to hear through Pawnee from the parties sent to make the arrest by to-morrow night."

And hear they did, late the next evening. The party sent out from Pawnee rode north to the Mini Ska until they struck the cavalry trail near Painted Lodge, then followed the battalion on to camp. Schultz and Schramm had neither been seen nor heard of by the battalion since they were sent back from Bear Fork.

VIII.

It was on a Wednesday morning that Old Tintop marched away from Ransom. It was on Friday morning at dawn that the robbery occurred at Minden, Friday at guard-mounting that Schultz and Schramm reached the post, Friday noon that the news of the robbery came to Major Rhett, by which time the two couriers were again up and away, going, as we have seen, to have a quiet dinner by themselves in town before starting to return to their detachment. Fanning, proprietor of the Empire stables, said they had unsaddled in his corral about half-past twelve, had told him to feed at four, as they purposed starting in the cool of the evening; but they came back hurriedly just before three, saddled up, paid their reckoning, and left. He knew Schultz well; the other was a stranger, twenty years younger. Conway, keeper of the thriving restaurant, said the sergeant and his friend came in about one. He knew Schultz well also, and Schultz ordered a good dinner to be served, with a bottle of Rhine wine, as soon as convenient. They were shown to the curtained alcove at the rear end of the house, farthest from the bar, and were waited upon by the Mongolian combination cook and waiter. Meantime, everybody coming into the bar was talking of the robbery, and finally about half-past two Conway went himself to the box occupied by the Germans, and told

them the news. They got up at once, left their wine and coffee unfinished, and hastened out to get further particulars. A few minutes after three they were seen riding briskly away on the Minden road, north of the river. It was Saturday morning when the sheriff's officers were sent in pursuit, one party going by rail to Pawnee, as has been said, then taking horses and riding over to the lower valley of the Ska; the other followed the trail. On Sunday evening members of both parties met near Painted Lodge, one coming back from the command to report that Schultz and Schramm were not there and hadn't been there, the other riding eastward hard as they could to catch the malefactors whom they believed still ahead of them. Between the two the Germans had slipped out somewhere and gone none could say whither.

When Monday evening came there was news indeed. Tintop, by a forced march, had jumped between the Sioux raiding-parties and the agency, whither the renegades were now returning, and there had been a battle to the death. The fight had come off somewhere among the breaks on the north side of the Ska Sunday afternoon, ninety miles from the agency and a hundred from the nearest railway-station. The news came from Indian sources entirely, but neither agent, interpreter, mission priests, nor soldier guards could tell by what means they got the tidings, and no Indian or half-bred *would* tell. That they believed it authentic was evident from the wails and lamentations of certain bereaved squaws. All the agent could telegraph was that a collision had occurred and the losses were heavy on both sides. Tuesday morning dawned with no further particulars worthy of credence. But when No. 3 came in for breakfast at Butte, Colonel Rand, inspector-general of the department, stepped briskly off and inquired for despatches at the office of the hotel. Receiving several, he was shown at once to Major Graves's room.

With the paymaster at the moment were the sheriff and a brace of reporters. Mr. Lacy was away on some mysterious errand which was to result, so it was said, in the recovery of a large portion of the stolen funds. He had been gone since Sunday night. Rand thoughtfully read his telegrams as he mounted the stairs. The bell-boy's rap was answered by the sheriff, who was seated nearest the door, a proceeding at which Graves reddened; it smacked of proprietorship, an indefinable air of authority and possession on the part of the sheriff having become more and more noticeable to the paymaster ever since their visit to Ransom. It galled him, yet was manifested in so intangible a way he knew not how to resent it. The fact of the matter was, Graves didn't know how to do anything when Lacy was away. He had been in service only a year, despite his gray beard, and was the nominee of a man to whom neither Executive nor Senate could afford to say nay. He simply leaned upon Lacy, who for his part was unquestionably one of the ablest and most accomplished assistants a government official could expect to have.

"What do you want?" said the sheriff, gruffly. "Nobody rang."

"Don't want nawthin'," was the answer, as the boy's eyes wandered past the bulky form which was too familiar to be of interest, and

sought out the party who had been "held up." "There's a feller here askin' for Graves," he proceeded,—the use of a handle to a man's name being regarded in many far Western communities at that day as a virtual admission of personal inferiority. The paymaster heard his name and hastened to the door. Rand, swinging coolly along the corridor, reading his despatches, glanced up, gave no sign of recognition of the sheriff, but held out his hand to Graves, whose face lighted with relief and hope at sight of the staff-officer.

"Come right in, colonel," he exclaimed. "I'm mighty glad to see you. I've been hoping you'd come. My God! did you ever hear of a more perfect plant? Come in; I want to talk with you."

"Had your breakfast?" asked Rand, briefly, and barely glancing at the other occupants.

"Not yet. I—haven't much appetite to speak of, and these gentlemen came up to see me the first thing. Let me present——"

"Well, come and take breakfast with me, then. I'm hungry as a wolf, and I can't talk until later," interposed Rand.

"All right, colonel; I'll go with you in a minute. As I was saying, the sheriff and these gentlemen——" again indicating his friends.

"Don't let me intrude now, Graves. I'll order for two. Finish your business with your friends, and then join me as soon as you can." And, before the paymaster could present the sheriff or introduce anybody else, Rand whirled about and went striding slowly down the corridor, engrossed apparently in another despatch.

"Give me my old room, if you can," said he at the office, "and order breakfast for two at once. Give us a little table by ourselves: I'll be back here in ten minutes."

The colonel was not in sight when Graves, still accompanied by the sheriff and the correspondents, came down to the office. Nor did he reappear in the hall. Graves, nervous, anxious, and fretful, kept glancing at the main entrance, and finally led his faithful attendants to the porch without. Here they could command a view of the street both ways. In fifteen minutes a waiter came out to say that Major Graves's breakfast was getting cold, and the other gentleman was half through his'n; wanted to know if the major's friends wouldn't excuse him long enough to let him come in and get a bite. The correspondents saw through the scheme and took it all laughingly. The sheriff said he'd go with him. Rand looked neither surprised nor annoyed when the big fellow came bulging in. He bowed civilly, but continued his engrossing work of tearing a territorial chicken to shreds, simply saying they must excuse his apparent haste, he had had no supper the night before and a long day's work was ahead and he was ravenous. The sheriff grimly watched the well-known officer (every town and settlement in the department knew the general's right-hand adviser, Rand), and twice essayed to open talk on the subject of the robbery. Rand listened with every manifestation of polite interest, but vouchsafed not a word of his own. Suddenly pushing back his chair and tossing his napkin thereon as he rose, he said,—

"Now excuse me, major; finish your breakfast, and I'll write a letter or two. Join me in the office as soon as you're ready."

Of course Graves was ready in three minutes, and the sheriff also. Rand looked up, nodded cheerily, and went on with his letters. These he presently read over, folded, addressed, and stamped, with easy deliberation, and by this time the correspondents rejoined the major. Rand glanced at his watch, picked up his letters and took them to the desk. Graves and party followed. Then out came Rand's big cigar-case.

"Smoke?" he said, tendering the bunch to the sheriff, who pulled one forth in his pudgy fingers while Graves was presenting Messrs. So-and-So, of such and such papers, to both of whom Rand extended cordial greeting and his cigar-case, then took Graves by the arm, nodded cheerily a good-day to the party, and popped the paymaster through a side door. For an instant, only, they were too surprised to act. Then, with a "Well, I'll be damned!" the sheriff jumped to the door. There at the side entrance stood Fanning's best bay team and open buggy, Graves just being hoisted in. Rand sprang lightly after him, and, without a vestige of triumph on his face, blithely waved his hand to the party at the door, and away went the bays and the buggy.

"Well," said the sheriff, "if he isn't a cool one may I be—double damned!"

Not until afternoon could he, or any one else, for that matter, get at either Rand or Graves. Making a long circuit, and keeping him in constant chat, the colonel drove the unhappy paymaster out over the hard prairie roads, and towards noon reined up at the fort, where the team was turned over to an orderly, and the two staff-officers were welcomed by Morgan and regaled with lunch. Rand swore the canned lobster and commissary crackers and cheese, washed down with Budweiser, the most delicious things he ever tasted, and was full of sympathy with Morgan in his anxiety about Connie.

"Here's what you've got to do, old fellow," said he. "You must let that brave little woman come and pay us a visit. Send Lot and Billy, too. I've got a great big house, and my wife will be only too glad to hear child voices in it again. I like Connie. She's a brick. I'll send passes for the whole party, and the change will do her good. Now, speaking about Schramm: had he never told her about his antecedents?"

No, Morgan knew he hadn't. So later Rand went down to see Mrs. Hinkel, and thus it happened that he was still at the fort when along about three P.M. the wires began to warm up with other and graver matter. Rand was wanted at the instrument if by chance he was still at the fort, for it was necessary that he should be placed in immediate communication with the general, who was at department head-quarters, and presently the soldier operator's cheek began to pale, as he checked off and jotted down, name after name, the list of the killed and wounded in Tintop's daring fight against the combined war-parties of the reservations. The gallant old dragoon himself was safe, but Morgan's captaincy had come. The flag went down to half-staff unrebuked by the lonely officer in command, for brave Manning, his long-time troop-leader and friend, had fallen fighting hard. The list of the dead, though large, was exceeded by that of the wounded, and

supplemented by that of a party of whose fate no man could hazard more than mere conjecture. In addition to the names of Schultz and Schramm were those of ten other troopers reported among the missing. It was the roster of a little detachment sent out on the trail of alleged road-agents or robbers. They had started only a few hours before the fight, and were under the leadership of Lieutenant Thornton.

IX.

A special engine and car took Rand, the doctor, and certain hospital attendants eastward to Pawnee that evening, but meantime, on his return to town, the colonel had gracefully surrendered to the press. He had so much to tell about the action of Winthrop's command that it left little room for his views or theories as to the robbery. He won the hearts of the correspondents by offering to take them along with him and tell them all he could on the way, and thus get time to look into certain other matters with which he was charged. He asked the sheriff for a description of the bills found in Schramm's box, and the sheriff allowed him to see the packet and make memoranda for himself. He asked to see Mr. Lacy. In fact, he asked twice to see Mr. Lacy; but, though that gentleman had returned to the hotel at noon, he could not be found. He had gone out again after hearing that the major was driving somewhere with Colonel Rand. Up to the minute the special was reported ready, Mr. Lacy did not reappear, and when it was time to start Rand told the telegraph operator to send the following:

"BUTTE, Tuesday, 5.30 P.M.

"GENERAL C——, on No. 3:

"Just starting for Pawnee. No news here of Thornton's party. Rhett's battalion escorting wounded. Shall push forward to Mini Ska to-night. Ordered Graves to return with clerk to head-quarters by next train. Funds in safe by express. Shall stop to question Minden."

The run to Minden along the level valley was made in thirty minutes, and the agent was on the platform, a green flag hanging from the signal-arm overhead. The engineer, therefore, had orders to stop anyhow. A little knot of loungers had gathered, and with genuine frontier curiosity swarmed about the colonel as he took and opened the telegrams awaiting him. He read as he moved to the door of the station, and some of the party prepared to do likewise. Once inside the office, however, Rand shut and snapped the door behind him and turned on the agent:

"You were ordered, I believe, to send a written description of the two men who came to you with a despatch for Paymaster Graves and lured him on here Friday morning last. Have you done it?"

"Yes, sir. Sent it up to Mr. Burke at Butte to-day,—the division superintendent. I couldn't describe much. You see, it was still darkish, although—at least it was kind of dark in here, though it was after dawn outside. They wore their slouch-hats down low, and their

collars up. I didn't suspect anything. They were both bearded, and in the prime of life, I should say,—about thirty, perhaps. Looked as much like soldiers as any I've ever seen, out here, leastwise."

"Do you think you'd know 'em again?"

"Well, no, sir; to be frank, I don't. I didn't notice them particularly. They were so quiet, had so little to say. Only one of them spoke to me at all,—gave his message right out soldier-fashion, and said he was instructed to notify the lieutenant of the time it was wired. I sent it right off quick as I could get Pawnee, and then they went out again, leaving me at the desk. When they came back, just as the train hove in sight, although it was broad daylight I was paying attention to the train and not to them,—hardly heard a word, or more than even glanced at them, when No. 3 came in. I saw a little clump of men over by the stream watering their horses, and all had on army overcoats. These two fellows who met the paymaster were the ones that first came in; I'm certain as to that."

"Are you? Well, why? What was there to make you certain?"

"Because the fellow that did the talking used good English,—better than most soldiers,—and he ordered the other fellow around. The other called him 'sergeant,' the time he spoke."

"Good English, eh? Out-and-out Yankee, do you mean? or plains English, or Boston English? At all events, it sounded like a Yankee talking, not a foreigner, didn't it,—a German, for instance?" said Rand, eying him keenly.

"Well, now you speak of it, colonel, the fellow called sergeant had just a little accent,—German-like. But I mean he didn't use slang nor cuss words. He talked what we call book English."

"And you thought him only thirty?"

"Certainly not more than that. He looked so light and spry. But he had a pretty heavy beard. It covered all his face."

"No sprinkle of gray in it?"

"Well, sir, not that I noticed in that light."

"Where did they leave their horses, and what were the horses like, —bays? sorrels? chestnuts?"

"I didn't see their mounts at all, sir, except in a clump at a distance. They seemed mixed colors then."

"Exactly. Not all one color, as they would be if they belonged to one troop of cavalry,—bays, or sorrels, or grays?"

"Well, they were a good way off, colonel, and I can't be certain. Mr. Long, here, saw two men riding up along the north bank not more than twenty minutes after No. 3 pulled out."

"Yes. What colored horses were those two riding, Mr. Long?"

"Roans, sir. I could see plainly in the slanting sunshine. Clean-limbed little fellows, too. They were no plugs or bronchos. They were genuine cavalry horses."

Rand compressed his bearded lips, as he turned away, signalling to the conductor, "Go ahead."

That evening a little party pushed away northward from the quartermaster's field dépôt, established close to the railway-station at Pawnee. A long ride was ahead of them, as the doctor was sorely

needed. About the same hour, over in the Mini Ska valley, Rhett had pitched his few tents and posted his sentries and outlying pickets to guard the wounded and the helpless against possibility of Indian attack. True, Indians of the plains rarely attack at night, and are scary and superstitious as so many negroes. True, the hostiles were all back under the wing of the agency by this time, probably. But Rhett had never before been on Indian service, and, whether he had or not, determined to neglect no precaution. He had met the convoy returning from the scene of the fight, had relieved the cavalry guard, sending it back to overtake the battalion,—now fourscore miles away *en route* to a still more threatened point,—and, under the orders flashed after him by wire and swift courier, Rhett was coming back to Pawnee, bringing the sufferers with him. The killed had been buried, temporarily at least, at the scene of the savage fight. There were thirty wounded in his care, borne mostly on travois and drawn by captured Indian ponies. When he halted at the end of his day's march Painted Lodge Butte bore southwest by west perhaps fifteen miles away, and the stage-station at the bridge over the Mini Ska lay probably five miles from their up-stream picket. A group of officers, chatting in low tones around the camp-fire among the cottonwoods, dispersed about ten P.M., and all but the commander of the guard rolled into their blankets, one or two of the number enjoying a good-night whiff at their brier-roots as they stretched themselves on the sod. Beyond the heavy breathing of some sleeper and occasionally a feverish moan among the wounded, who, with their attendants, were sheltered in a little hollow out of reach of possible shot, the camp was very quiet. The few horses, the mules and Indian ponies were securely hoppled and guarded where they could graze at will on a bench just to the north of camp, and when the moon came riding up the eastern sky and faintly picturing the bluff-bordered valley, the scene was one of calm and placid repose. Fenton, the officer of the day, could not help remarking upon it, as he went trudging out over the grassy slope for a midnight visit to his pickets. They had been talking of the strange and successful scheme by which the outlaws had lured the paymaster on to Minden and there robbed him, for the theory of the civil authorities that cavalrymen alone were the perpetrators had received something of a set-back when these gentlemen from Ransom met the wounded and the guards from Tintop's command and learned that the only absentees at the time of the robbery were Schultz and Schramm, who could hardly have effected it by themselves; and what opportunity had they had of learning the paymaster's movements? True, the sheriff's people, unable to find out what had become of the two, forbidden to invade the confines of another Territory, which they would do if they followed the cavalry, afraid to linger in the valley after the cavalry had gone, and utterly averse to searching among the Sioux trails for their prey, had returned to the railway. Among the wounded was Lieutenant Edwards, the paymaster's friend, and no one was more interested about this affair in which his name had been so recklessly and effectively misused than Edwards himself. The young doctor with the wounded told him he mustn't talk so much, but Edwards was bound to find out

all he could, and so it happened that this very night, catching sight of the officer of the day as he started out on his rounds, Edwards feebly hailed him, on the shallow pretence that he had something to tell.

"Say, cap., I wanted to ask you if you knew we were just about opposite the gap that Thornton and his fellows took to pursue those road-agents?"

"Certainly. They went right up over yonder," said Fenton, pointing to where, dim and shadowy, a ravine seemed to pierce, wedge-like, the barrier of the northward range. "But what do you mean by lying awake and asking conundrums when you ought to be asleep?"

"Because I'm a damned sight more interested in old Graves's predicament than I am in our own, though I may yet have to convince a vigilant treasury that some other fellow, not I, sent that despatch. We were only some twenty miles east of here when that courier caught us with the news of the thing and the statement that the gang had scattered, some coming our way. The courier himself saw two of them, he said, as he came across the bridge, far up across the prairie, riding for Wagon Gap for all they were worth. Then he sneaked over and struck the trail and said that not two but six, at least, had gone to the Gap. That's how Thornton came to be sent back with orders to pursue and punish, capture, recover, and all manner of things that Tintop knew perfectly well he couldn't do, yet had to order him in compliance with his own instructions. He must have ridden right across the line of flight of the Sioux we whipped on Sunday, and, if so, God help him and his! There's nothing left of 'em but wolf-bait now."

"Oh, you're a little used up, Edwards. They'll squeeze through all right, I think. Quit your talking, and go to sleep."

"I can't sleep. 'Tisn't that this hole hurts me so, or that I'm so thirsty, but I can't get that confounded business out of my head, and I'm worried about Thornton."

"Well, shut up," said the captain. "Listen." And he stood holding out a warning hand.

"What do you hear?" asked Edwards, presently.

"I can't hear anything, thanks to your clatter. I thought I heard a challenge 'way up-stream where our picket is. Do be quiet now."

Both men listened with strained ears. Over at the edge of the bench to the northeast where the drowsy animals were scattered, a slowly-pacing sentry had halted, turned about, and, with the moonbeams glinting on his rifle, he too was listening, as though his attention had been attracted by some sound on the up-stream side of the camp.

"What was it, Lucas?" asked the officer of the day, coming up out of the hollow where the wounded were lying.

"I don't know, sir. The noise off yonder awhile ago was coyotes, but this cry came from up the bank."

"So I thought. It sounded like a challenging sentry. Who are out there?"

"Corporal Rafferty, sir, and two of B Company. I couldn't see anything, yet about ten minutes ago six or eight of them mules were pricking up their ears and looking out across that stretch of prairie yonder like as though they'd seen or smelt something."

The captain waited no longer. Turning away from the sentry, he walked rapidly out upon the bench which overlooked the river-bottom. Up here the moon illumined his way, while underneath the low crest there were fallen cottonwoods and more or less jungle and tangle to trip over. A camp sentry, well hidden under the bank, waited until his senior was close at hand, then challenged in muffled tone.

"Have you heard anything unusual off yonder?" asked the officer of the day as soon as he had been formally advanced and recognized.

"There's voices out there, sir, and horses. Rafferty's party has got 'em, whoever it is."

Presently two horsemen, piloted by a soldier afoot, came slowly through the timber towards them.

"Don't challenge," said Captain Fenton. "I'll hail.—What have you there, corporal?" he sharply asked, when the party had come within a dozen yards.

"That you, cap.?" queried a voice with the Western twang in it. "Good Lord, but I'm glad to git yere! We've ridden seventy-five likely miles since morning, and ain't had a drink for twenty-four hours. Say, any of our other fellows yere? We're the posse sent out from Butte."

"Oh! I thought you'd given up and gone home," said Fenton, shortly, disappointed somehow that it was not a courier.

"Well, we did start, till we got word of Lieutenant Thornton's striking the trail, then we turned round and followed him. Luckily, the Sioux headed us off."

"Why luckily?"

"Good Lord! ain't you heard? The lieutenant and his men were corralled up at Slaughter Cove. I don't reckon there's hide nor hair of any of 'em left by this time, 'cept what the Indians have got on their scalp-belts."

"Slaughter Cove, man! why, that's not more than thirty miles north of us,—through the Gap."

"That's all true, perhaps, but we had to ride around a whole county to work our way out. The Sioux have got the swag by this time, robbers, troopers, and all."

X.

A proud boy was Perry Thornton the night the details of the robbery reached them. Finding no paymaster at Willow Springs on Friday noon, and alarmed by reports of Indian outrages down the Mini Ska, Tintop, as has been seen, decided to push on for Painted Lodge as soon as men and horses had enjoyed an hour of nooning; and so by sunset of the long June day the cavalry had put some forty-three miles to their credit and gone into camp once more, close to the stream, and not more than ten miles from the bridge over which was carried the broad and once well-beaten trail from Pawnee to the

agency. Thornton, eager to win his spurs, and being a prime favorite with Tintop, as indeed he was with everybody, had been accorded the bliss of a side-scout, and was sent over to the stage-station at the bridge to gather news. There was no difficulty in loading up with rumors. The air was full of them. Perry found at the station half a dozen cowboys, ranchmen, and the like, most of whom had escaped by the skin of their teeth and the performance of prodigies of personal valor. The old telegraph-line from Pawnee to the station was intact, but north through Wagon Gap and so on to the agency there had been no communication for a week, and no one was venturesome enough to go out and discover why. Around by way of Bismarck and Yankton it was easy, though slow work, to communicate with the agency people, and the situation warranted the belief that the Sioux had slashed the wires running southward from their reservation, and therefore towards the railway and the coming soldiers, but had left the northeastward passage open, under the natural impression that no tidings could ever get to the enemy by a road that ran the opposite way. Perry was urged by his informants to get back to camp and bring up the cavalry, and had not gone a mile before the accident happened which led to the shooting of the horse he was riding. The telegraph company, thinking to be enterprising, had sent a young man out with an instrument only the day before, and reopened the old office at Ska Bridge station, and when a cowboy came running in to say the lieutenant and his party had been jumped on the way back to Painted Lodge the despatch was sent at once which so alarmed the good folk at Ransom and which Rhett found means to modify on the following day; by which time, however, the truth was learned at Ska Bridge, as the cavalry battalion, "going for all it was worth," passed on downstream in a cloud of alkali-dust. Perry was ready for another ride even after a long day's march when, late Saturday night, as they slept far down the Ska, a courier rode in from the stage-station behind with full particulars of the robbery and the news that some of the gang were unquestionably striving to escape towards the Indian agency to the north, and had been seen spurring through Wagon Gap. The telegraph operator at the station had told Old Tintop all that he knew of the affair during the brief moment that the colonel halted, but now despatches and authentic news came after them.

"We've got to send an officer and ten men on the trail of those beggars," said Tintop, sitting up in his blankets and reading by the light of Gray's lantern. "Whose turn is it?"

"Mine, colonel," sang out a cheery voice from a roll of bedding under an opposite cottonwood, and in a moment Thornton, fresh as a daisy, was pulling on his boots and girding himself for the ride.

"You've just got back, you young cub, and the horse you killed was worth the news you brought ten times over," growled the colonel.

"Well, that's why I want to have another go, sir," was the prompt, laughing answer. And Tintop would not say him nay.

It was this way that Thornton came to miss the stirring fight of the battalion on the Sunday noontide, and to stumble into a siege of his own beside which, in point of peril and pluck and long-continued

strain, the fierce, brief hour of battle of his comrades was but a bagatelle.

At one A.M. on Sunday he and his little squad rode away on the westward trail, guided by the couriers who brought the news. Two miles back from camp they left the river and edged away to their right over the moonlit valley towards a rift in the boundary hills just faintly visible in the dim and ghostly light. An hour after dawn they halted in a deep ravine to water their horses, and then went loping on again, Thornton eager and exultant, proud of his trust and determined to overhaul the robbers if riding could do it. By noon Sunday they had pushed northward out of the Gap with the fresh trail leading on; by one had halted to feed, water, and unsaddle awhile in the midst of the wild scenery at the head of Fossil Creek, the ten-mile pass out of sight behind and the rocky walls of Slaughter Cove no great distance ahead. It was here that Sergeant Jeffers, instead of lying down and resting, as did the others, was seen bending double and examining the tracks of their predecessors all along the bank and among the trees. Wherever a horse had stepped in the mud and the hoof-print remained unbroken he bent closer and studied it with mingled interest and anxiety. At last Thornton, watching him as he munched his bit of hard bread and chocolate, took his tin mug to the brook for a drink and turned on the non-commissioned officer.

"What are you studying so closely, sergeant?"

"These hoof-prints, sir. There are two I've seen this morning that worried me at first, in view of the charge made that the robbers were cavalrymen."

"Why so?"

"Just this, sir. Two of these horses we're after wear the government cavalry shoe. Look here, and here. I could almost swear those shoes were fitted and every nail driven and clinched by D Troop's farrier."

"And do you mean that some of our fellows are actually mixed up in the robbery, after all? Why, man alive, there's no one out but Schultz and Schramm."

"That's just exactly what I don't believe, sir, if by being mixed up in the matter the lieutenant means they belong to the gang. No, sir; for the last hour it has been dawning on me that we are not following one party, but two. An Indian would have told us this before now. The first party went through the Gap hours ahead of the second, and we're as many hours behind. The first party probably were the road-agents; the second, chasing as hard as they could, were Schultz and Schramm."

"How do you make it out?" asked Thornton, his bright eyes ablaze with interest.

"Well, everywhere through the Gap, lieutenant, these cavalry hoof-prints showed atop of the others. In every case where there was soft ground you could see that our print was the last made. The first party camped here, fed, watered, ate, and smoked, and finally went on; our fellows merely fed and watered and hastened after them. You can see where their horses were tethered, where the cooking was done,

where they lay and smoked. Some of them had cigars. I picked up three stumps. Our fellows never stopped more than to give their horses what grain they had left in their nose-bags, and a good long drink. It was Schultz and Schramm, simply because they alone were away from the command. They had gained on the gang considerably, too, through the halt of the former right here, and I believe we'll hear from them yet."

Two hours later, pushing on in grim determination still on the trail, with the opening of the strange, wild, heavily-timbered rift in the hills named but the previous summer Slaughter Cove, just to their left, the party rode suddenly out from among the pines to where a bare, treeless shoulder of the mountains towered between them and the east. Northward up a steep ascent among scattered timber went the trail, and Thornton and Jeffers dismounted to lead and rest their panting horses. The others in silence followed their example. Slowly they clambered up the winding path, each moment nearing the crest, and at last within half a dozen yards of the top Jeffers signalled with his bare brown hand, tossed his reins to the nearest trooper, and then, bending low and removing his scouting-hat, went crouching towards a little cairn of stone, an old Indian guide-post made to keep their runners from losing the way in the depths of a Dakota winter, when all the face of nature was veiled in snow. One after another as they closed up on the leaders the weary men halted, and some at once threw themselves upon the sod; all allowed their horses to graze. For a moment Jeffers lay flat, peering over the crest; then of a sudden he seemed to catch sight of something that set him all of a quiver. He shaded his eyes with his hand and stared, slowly rising to his feet, the muscles of his lips and jaws twitching with suppressed excitement. Thornton, busily engaged at the moment in opening the case of his field-glass, did not at first see him. Just as he had drawn out the binocular and wiped the object-glass with a silken handkerchief, one of the troopers muttered, "Look, lieutenant, he's beckoning." And in a moment, with beating heart, the boy had crept to the veteran's side.

It was a wonderful view that opened before his eyes. They were halted on the eastward slope of a bold, rock-ribbed, pine-covered range that seemed to stretch away northward without pass or break for many a league until lost in a maze of similar black-crested heights that, perhaps forty miles away, veered around to the east again, curtaining the intervening slopes and foot-hills and valleys until it was merged in the general haze of the far eastern horizon. All the rude, rugged chain of hills bristled with its growth of pine and cedar, glistened here and there with its outcropping of boulder and quartz, or glinted when the searching sunshine fell on the duller hues of gneiss and granite. All the rolling foot-hills, a tumbling sea of spotless green, shimmered in the unclouded rays. Far as the eye could reach, northeast, east, southeastward again, a glorious stretch of upland prairie, of wind-swept, woodless turf, once the roaming-ground of countless thousands of the wild cattle of the Western world, the now annihilated buffalo. Far away to the southeast, dim and indistinct, a dark winding fringe told where the Mini Ska rolled smoothly through its wide and open

valley. Far away to the northeast, among rounded bluffs and palisaded buttes, a shining blue ribbon turned and twisted, dove out of sight under grass-grown walls, only to come gleaming into view again still farther on, the Wakpa Wakon,—Spirit River,—curling through the heart of the reservation, the sacred lands of the Sioux. There, somewhere to the north, sheltered from the fierce wintry gales by the grand curtain of bearded mountain to its west and north, hidden from sight by its surrounding citadels of bluff, lay the substantial settlement of the agency, a long day's march away. There in every deep sequestered valley, along every babbling stream, lay the lodges of the pampered tribes,—old men and children, old women and young, living indolently and in plenty at their guarded homes, while the sons and brothers and braves, the war-chiefs and the turbulent young men, swarmed into the forbidden grazing-grounds of the settlers, far beyond the treaty line, and in rude and bloody foray found their sole content. The trail the cavalry squad had followed in the early morning along the windings of a feeble tributary of the Mini Ska had left the broad valley thirty miles away to the south, and, bursting through a dividing ridge by way of Wagon Gap, left the old beaten road at the Springs where they made their noonday halt, plunged into the timbered ascent close to the backbone of the ridge, while the road, by a sweep or détour to the east, climbed gradually to the level of the upland and could be faintly seen in places five or six miles away like a dun-colored ribbon gartering the green carpet of the prairie. To their left and rear a frowning gorge in the heart of the range opened the narrow way that led to the basin or cove among the pine-covered hills,—the Slaughter Cove the guide had pointed out at noon. To their right, therefore, all was bold, open, undulating, smiling in unclouded sunshine; to their left—the west—all was dark, frowning, and forbidding; and yet the one was the path of death and danger, the other the only line of escape.

"By Jove, what a magnificent view!" is Thornton's exclamation after a moment's gaze. "What did you see, sergeant? You looked as though something lively was up. Any sight of the chase?"

But Jeffers, crouching low and pointing over along the slope not a quarter of a mile away, simply said, "Look there, sir."

Two lithe, painted objects, crawling slowly on all-fours, with feathered war-bonnets trailing along their bare red backs, were rapidly nearing a third, who, bareheaded, seemed peering over the ridge in his front at some other objects in the ravine beyond, at something out of sight from where the troopers lay. Behind the two crawling creatures first seen came, at ten or twelve yards' distance, others of their kind, eagerly gesticulating and signalling to others still. All on a sudden three or four ponies, placidly cropping the turf down the slope behind their creeping masters, pricked up their ears and glanced nervously around, and in a moment there rode into view, full tilt, one after another, half a dozen more wild warriors in the full panoply of their craft. And—it was his first campaign, he was only a boy—Perry Thornton's heart leaped up in his throat, for the sunshiny, breezy, billowy upland was simply alive with war-parties of Sioux.

"I am willing to do my share of fight,—fight double my weight

of Indians, gentlemen," the guide was saying a moment later. "God only knows what's set them on to us, but the whole Sioux nation's coming up from the Mini Ska, and we're cut off. I can't fight all hell, neither can you. The one chance of getting out of this is by way of Slaughter Cove. There's a game-trail over the range back of it. They ain't seen us yet. Now is our time."

"Whom have they seen? What are they watching over there?" asked Thornton, his lip trembling a bit despite himself.

"I know without waiting to see. It's your fellers coming back from their chase after the road-agents. They have either got the money or they haven't got it. In either case it'll be of no earthly use to them in ten minutes. Those Indians are laying to lay 'em out as they climb the trail. See?"

See? It was plain enough now. Creeping like panthers, the lithe, sinewy fellows were scurrying up to line the crest. Others, dismounting at the run, were hastening to join them. Others, signalling, were conveying some tidings to another party that, three miles away, could now be seen sweeping at full gallop across the Pawnee road.

"Come, gents," said the guide, sliding back to his horse and quickly mounting. "My partner had more sense'n I when he swore he wouldn't trust his scalp north of Wagon Gap. If you want to save your souls alive, mount and follow while there's yet time. I'm bound for the Cove and back to God's country beyond."

A nervous young trooper started to follow as the frontiersman went sliding and sprawling back down the trail, but a stern voice checked him. One glance in the sergeant's eyes was all the reassurance Thornton needed. The spirit of his soldier father spoke out on the instant:

"Stay where you are, men! Let that d—d coward go. We're here to save Schultz and Schramm."

XI.

A moment longer the two soldiers, boy lieutenant and veteran sergeant, remained crouched at the ridge, peering over, and in low eager tones making their plans. The actions of the Indians clearly indicated that they were, as the guide remarked, "laying" for some party coming back along the trail. There could not be more than four or five in the party, or the Indians would not attack at the moment, but wait until they had more of their kind to back them. There could not be less than two or three, or the warriors would have been down on the poor devils before this, six to one. The one dread now was that they might shoot from the rocks before their friends could interfere. All this was hurriedly discussed, then up spoke Thornton: "We'll charge at once. We can drive them off, get Schultz and Schramm out, and then all retire together into the Cove. Mount! Tumble up there, you men. Drop carbines and draw pistols. Keep watch, sergeant. Wait till we're ready."

And now the intense excitement of the moment seems to communi-

cate itself even to the tired horses. Eagerly they begin to toss their heads and paw the earth and sniff and snort. "Smell the Sioux, do you?" mutters one trooper, as he braces tighter the cinch of his saddle. There is indeed "mounting in hot haste," yet without noise or confusion of any kind. Perry's young heart is beating like a forge, and for the life of him he can't prevent a trembling at the knees as he swings into saddle and looks to the chamber of his revolver. It's his first fight, yet so constantly has he studied and pondered over all the experiences of his comrades that he feels certain his plan is the right one,—to burst from their covert, stampede the dozen Indians close at hand, then slip away with the victims that were to be, before the more distant warriors can reach the spot. Once back within the natural fortress of the Cove, they can bid defiance to five times their number. Meanwhile, the men, some a little white and tremulous, others, veterans at the business, cool and imperturbable, have mounted, slipped the muzzles of their carbines into the ready sockets, and, like their young leader, are testing their pistols. Jeffers raises his hand in signal. "They're getting ready, sir. Two of them are sighting now."

"Then we haven't a second to lose," says Thornton. "Just follow me now, full dash; but don't yell till I do. Keep quiet till we get right on 'em. Then gather in our fellows and get back here quick as you can. Forward now. I shan't give any commands."

Up the slope they ride in column of twos. There's no space to form "front into line." Perry's heart and Perry's horse alike are bounding. Ten seconds, and they are over the crest and in full view of their foemen four hundred yards away, between them only the open, rolling surface of elastic turf. Quick as each man reaches the summit he plunges ahead, "opens out," and rides up on line with the leaders, Thornton, still curbing his excited horse, riding at plunging lope and glancing back to see his followers out of the ravine. Then Jeffers comes tearing up to join him. Then comes a loud, resonant, Indian warning, shouted from somewhere down the sunny slope, and then there's no time to think. Every man at the instant claps spurs to his horse's flanks and sets up a yell, and then down they go in sweeping charge, straight at the painted, feathered bipeds leaping for their ponies along the opposite rise. Distant Indians let drive long-range shots, in hopes of downing a horse and breaking the impetus of the cavalry dash. There are three or four of these who have reached their ponies, leaped into saddle, and, as they scurry away, bend low and send a wild shot or two at the rushing horsemen, but all to no purpose. Thornton and his followers come cheering, charging on, straight for the second crest, and in an instant one luckless warrior is tumbled over by the leaders, while Jeffers and Malloy, long used to hunting in couples, have run down another, who, farther to the left, had sought to mount and escape. The ping and crack of revolvers and Winchesters echoing back from the rocky range are suddenly dwarfed by the louder bang of the Springfield rifle. Dashing up and over the ridge, occupied but an instant before by the red men, Thornton comes into view of a little party away down the trail ahead of him. Two of their horses are already shot, one stiffening out in death, one rolling in agony. Two

white men, dismounted, are battling for their lives against a circling rush of Sioux, and, borne by the mad impetus of the charge, Perry and the half-dozen at his heels swoop headlong down among the combatants, and the Sioux, amazed yet never bewildered, bend low on their ponies' necks and go sweeping away up the farther side of the long ravine, then, circling about, spring to earth and at long range resume the fight. Their bullets are whistling about Thornton's ears, as he reins up in the midst of the rescued party. One man, with the film of death already glazing his eyes, a stranger, lies gasping on the turf. Over him, piteously crying his name, a mere boy is bending. Sergeant Schultz, grave, yet with quivering lip and trembling hand, gives greeting to his young officer. "We were surprised, sir, and cut off. We had no hope of rescue," he is saying, while the men are rapidly dismounting and running out to kneel and return the fire now coming in from almost every side, Schramm, cheering with delight and enthusiasm, leading them on.

Then comes the up-hill fight to gain the Cove. Not an instant can be lost. Already, with soldierly appreciation of the situation, Sergeant Jeffers has dismounted two or three men to hold the ridge over which lies the line of retreat, and Thornton, directing two men to lead back the horses, disperses his little force as skirmishers. "Get your wounded back up the hill," he says to Schultz. "Jeffers knows where we are to make our stand. Fall back, fast as you can. We'll keep 'em off." The bullets are nipping the bunch-grass all round them, and the old German sergeant's face is very grave and white, but he never wavers. Schramm, after hoisting the wounded stranger into saddle and giving the reins into the hands of the weeping boy and calling for some one to steady his father, runs back to join the firing line. Slowly up the trail now Schultz marshals the led horses. Back slowly between them and the yelling Indians, now each moment reinforced, comes the little band of defenders. Over to the left, a young trooper, under fire for the first time, suddenly drops his carbine, claps hands to his leg, and sets up a howl of misery.

"Help him if you can, Schramm," sings out Thornton. "Keep your places, the rest of you." Thicker come the hissing bullets from front and flank. Only Jeffers's forethought saves them from attack in rear. At last the horses, snorting and plunging, have reached the ridge and are led safely over into the swale beyond. At last the German sergeant has convoyed his wounded across the barrier, then turns for one or two shots over the heads of his comrades now backing up the slope. It is the instinct of battle, the impulse of the soldier,—and the last of his soldierly life. Finger on trigger, muscular hand grasping the brown carbine in the act of aiming, down, face foremost on the sward, poor Schultz has tumbled, a Winchester bullet tearing through his loyal heart.

Five minutes later, in a little amphitheatre among the rocks, two hundred yards to the west of the ridge from which the Indians first were sighted, the well-nigh breathless detachment is regathering, and the fight goes on. Here, stretched on the ground, stone-dead now, lies the civilian,—the stranger found in company with Schultz and

Schramm,—while sobbing over him kneels his boy. Here, badly frightened, the wounded recruit has been dropped and told to quit his noise. Here, badly wounded, lies Corporal Treacy, an Irish trooper whose five years in the cavalry have known many a scene of death and danger, but whose only worry now is that he cannot fire another shot. Here Jeffers is posting the men among the rocks as they arrive, so as to cover the retreat of the lieutenant and two or three still out at the front and for the moment invisible. Schramm, having dropped his wounded comrade under a sheltering boulder, has run up to Jeffers just as two men come drifting in, one supporting the other, who is bleeding and deathly white.

"They have killed Bredow, my horse," he cries, his blue eyes snapping and great beads of sweat starting from his face. "Where is the lieutenant?"

"Back there, trying to lug in Schultz's body," gasps the wounded man. "Only two fellows left. Hurry—save——" and down he goes in a dead faint.

"Schultz's body! Gott in Himmel!" cries Schramm, as with one bound he is over the boulders and rushing out to the front again.

Two hundred yards away, just over the ridge, with whoop and yell and flashing rifles, the Indians have concentrated their energies on one devoted little squad. Stumbling up the slope, Thornton has come upon the prostrate form of the veteran soldier, stone-dead, yet in mute appeal seeming to beg that he be not left to the savage mutilation of the Sioux. "Here, Connor!—Help me, Fritz!" he shouts to the nearest men; and so, desperate and daring, the three join forces to save their friend. One drags, the others fire, and they have just got the senseless clay to within ten yards of the crest, when with triumphant rush and yell the mounted Sioux come charging at them. Poor Perry! All in a flash he sees that hope has fled,—that here on this wild upland, far from home and loved ones, just at the opening of the career so long sought, so proudly entered, his gallant, manful, soldierly effort has cost him his life. But he has lived like a Thornton,—like a Thornton he'll die; and, kneeling by Schultz's lifeless form, he drives the last shot from the sergeant's carbine, tosses it aside, grips tight his beautiful revolver, a proud father's gift, and with a last prayer on his lips, and mother's face swimming before his eyes, braces himself for the shock. There is sudden clamor of shots behind him. Straight in front, not forty yards away, a charging Sioux plunges head-foremost to the ground, his pony veers wildly, so do two others, and the well-aimed shots have taken effect. "Courage!" he shouts. "They haven't got us yet." For, checked by this unlooked-for salute and dreading more, the warriors duck and swerve and circle away. Then down comes Schramm, with Jeffers a close second.

"Quick, lieutenant! Quick! Back to the ridge! We'll bring Schultz."

Too late. Seeing how puny in numbers are the little party of rescuers, the Sioux come on again, firing as they dash, and then for the first time Thornton finds his hands and arms covered with blood. A deadly faintness overcomes him. The earth begins to swim and rock

and whirl, and he only knows that Schramm has swung him on his broad and muscular shoulders before he swoons away. They are holding his flask to his lips when—safe for a time at least—he reopens his eyes among the rocks at Slaughter Cove.

"Where are the Indians?" he faintly asks.

"It's what I can't understand," says Jeffers. "We could see whole troops of them riding away like the wind, southeastward towards the Ska. There ain't more'n a dozen round us now, I reckon,—not enough to attack, yet too many to admit of our getting out, with all our wounded. Thank God, sir, we got you back in time to check the blood. That bullet just missed the jugular, but you bled like a stuck pig. Schramm says you were all covered with it when he reached you."

"I didn't know I was hit—more than a mere graze," said Thornton, faintly.

"Hit twice, sir. You got the other when they dashed on us at the crest and Schramm had to drop you for a minute."

"Did Schramm carry me out?"

"Every foot of the way, sir. The little Dutchman is made of steel: only he's heart-broken about Schultz. We couldn't fetch him in, sir. They got the body, after all, and I had to order Schramm under arrest to prevent his going out a second time."

Thornton closes his eyes a moment. Faint from loss of blood, the realization of the peril of the past hour and the danger of the present, he knows no pain from his wounds, he realizes that he is in command, responsible for all, and that there may yet be a demand for his every energy. He needs to think; yet everything seems awhirl.

"Take another pull at this, lieutenant," says Jeffers. "You're very weak yet, but we're all right now." And he holds the flask to the boy's lips and raises him on his arm. "It's my belief the battalion has struck the main body of these beggars over near the river, and flash-signals have been going for the last hour. We can see 'em with your glasses. If they have, we're well avenged, for there isn't an old hand in all the regiment that isn't just mad for a fair fight with 'em. They won't bother us more this day, so long as we keep inside and under cover, and if the colonel's after them the rest won't stop to inquire for us to-morrow either."

"How many are wounded?" asks Thornton, feebly.

"Well, sir, there's yourself and Corporal Treacy,—you're the only ones seriously hurt. Little Reddy there is shot in the leg, and three or four are scratched. Schramm's shirt is full of holes, and I thought he must be hit, he was so covered with blood. Between losing Schultz and Bredow, he feels pretty well broke up; but there won't be anything too good for him in the regiment when we get back, sir. Here he comes now: he's been over at the spring, washing off the blood."

Thornton feebly turns: "Schramm, my brave fellow! it seems I owe my life to you. Where would I have been but for your courage?"

And Schramm, apparently not seeing the hand feebly outstretched, stands at salute and replies,—

"Where would I have been, sir, but for the lieutenant?"

XII.

"HEAD-QUARTERS DETACHMENT —TH INFANTRY,
CAMP AT SLAUGHTER COVE, June —, 187—.

"POST ADJUTANT, FORT RANSOM:

"SIR,—I have the honor to report that in compliance with the verbal orders of the major commanding the battalion I marched with four officers and seventy men of Companies E and H, —th Infantry, to the relief of Lieutenant Thornton's detachment of the 11th Cavalry, reported besieged by Indians at this point. Leaving camp of the battalion on the Mini Ska at 1 A.M. on Wednesday, with three days' cooked rations, we reached Buffalo Springs soon after dawn (6½ miles), pushed on through Wagon Gap, reaching the head-waters of Fossil Creek (27½ miles from camp) at 10.45. From this point our advance was slow, as Indians could be seen along the heights, and we had reason to expect attack. They drew off at our approach, however, and we reached the besieged party near Slaughter Cove about 1 P.M., much to the relief of its members, who, though at no time suffering for food or water, were without surgical attention for their wounded, and had had a sharp fight with a large force of hostiles on Sunday, and had been under fire much of the time ever since. Fortunately for them, the general engagement between their comrades of the Eleventh and the main body of the enemy, forty miles to the southeast, had the effect of drawing all but a small number away from their front and of driving them thence to the agency. There is every reason to believe, however, they would have returned by this time to finish their bloody work had we not been hurried to the scene.

"The killed are Sergeant Schultz and a civilian by the name of Stearns, whose son, a lad of eighteen, is with us, but seems so distracted by his recent experience that his mind is unbalanced. The civilian was one of a party of four who had ridden northward and were pursued by Sergeant Schultz and Private Schramm on the supposition that they were connected with the paymaster's robbery at Minden and had the money with them. Schramm reports that these two met them close to the scene of the fight, galloping back, saying they were attacked by Sioux, and their comrades, who were some distance ahead, were probably killed. The speedy appearance of the Indians proved the truth of part at least of their story. Lieutenant Thornton's prompt charge saved the lives of the two troopers, but in the engagement which followed Schultz was killed, and the other casualties were the result of an attempt to save his body. Lieutenant Thornton, who appears to have behaved with great gallantry throughout, being twice wounded in the effort, was himself saved from death by the devotion of Private Schramm, who bore him away on his shoulders in the face of a dozen enemies. Among the other wounded are Sergeant Jeffers, Corporal Treacy, Troopers Reddy and Gross. Dr. French reports that they can speedily be moved to Pawnee, and urges that as soon as possible ambulances be sent to meet us.

"After the wounding of Sergeant Jeffers, the active command of the defence was vested in Private Schramm, whose bravery and skill

were so marked as to win from his superiors the most unstinted praise. He is now threatened with fever as the result of exposure and exhaustion and grief over the death of his friend, but Dr. French hopes that it will prove nothing of great gravity.

"We begin the homeward march, carrying the wounded on litters, to-morrow morning. The body of Sergeant Schultz, fearfully mutilated, was found and afterwards buried by our men this afternoon.

"The conduct of the detachment under my command was excellent: every man was in his place at the end of the thirty-five-mile march.

"Very respectfully,
"Your obedient servant,
"D. G. FENTON,
"*Capt. —th Infantry, Commanding.*"

Such was the official report which had followed Rhett's command back to Ransom and brought a gleam of sunshine through all the gloom. The death of Captain Manning, an officer of sterling worth, and that of so many good men and true, three of whom had families at the post, could not but weigh heavily on the spirits of one and all. The home-coming of the wounded, however, called for the active services of many hands as well as the liveliest sympathy of every heart, for the journey by field and rail had been a trying ordeal in the fierce heat which for seven days after Winthrop's fight had seemed to hard-bake the broad valley of the Ska even to the westward mountains. Then the grief aroused by the casualties in the main engagement had been supplemented by keen anxiety as to the fate of Perry Thornton and his party. Rhett was a cool-headed fellow and had done about the right thing: even Edwards and other cavalry cranks were ready to admit that. Aroused soon after midnight by his officer of the day and the demoralized deputy, he had little time to think. Orders required him with his battalion to march back to Pawnee as escort for the wounded. Communication with department head-quarters in the dead of night would have involved hours of delay. The deputy might be lying, yet the chances were in favor of the truth of his stories. Rhett knew the bulk of the Indians must have scampered for home in order to show up at the muster sure to be made, so as to convince the agency officials, at least, of their presence, and that they therefore could have had no part in the recent outrages. The general had taken the field, going 'cross country after Winthrop, and was now far beyond telegraphic reach. If the Sioux had surrounded Thornton near Slaughter Cove, the sooner help was sent the better. Fenton, always ready for anything and keenly relishing the idea of footmen marching to the relief of cavalry, was promptly told to take his own company and Company E and "get there." The cooks were up, coffee boiling, and bacon sizzling, before the order was fairly out of the major's mouth, and the command marched away towards the gap in the far blue hills under the twinkling pole-star within the hour.

"God speed you, old man! Send us word quick as you can," said

Rhett, as the dusky little column went swinging away out of camp. "Give 'em a lick for me, Mickey," called Private Toohey to a chum in a luckier company than his own. And that was the last heard of them for twenty-nine hours. Then two of the lately-besieged troopers, Fritz and Reuter, came trotting in among the travois just as the convoy broke camp at the mouth of Pawnee Gorge, twenty miles nearer home. Leaving the Cove at dark the previous evening, they had ridden all night with the news of the rescue, had routed out the telegraph operator at Ska Bridge and sent away certain despatches with which they were charged, had learned that the major and his command had passed on about nine A.M. and would be found somewhere to the south along Pawnee Fork, and then pushed ahead with the glad tidings. Everybody, therefore, at Ransom knew the main facts long before Rhett and the wounded got home. Everybody mourned for Schultz, a veteran of nearly twenty years' service in the regiment, and rejoiced for Schramm, who had covered himself with glory. Everybody was proud of Thornton's spirited behavior in his maiden fight, and full of genuine distress over his wounds. Edwards, badly shot and a veteran of many a tough cavalry campaign, wasn't the object of one-tenth the sympathy that was lavished on "Pretty Perry," one of whose hurts—that slit along his neck—was a mere scratch, that would be an ornament to him all the rest of his life, while the hole bored by the little Winchester in his side was something that would soon heal and seldom hurt him. But who can paint the sensation at the Thorntons' happy home? Delight and dismay intermingled! Telegram followed telegram, that which came from the general late in the day blinding Colonel Thornton's eyes: "The regiment glories in your gallant boy. We'll send him East on leave at once. Full report by mail."

Then with what eagerness they waited the coming of letters and particulars! with what emotion did they read Perry's modest pencil scrawl, bidding them ascribe all credit to Jeffers and give all gratitude to Schramm! with what fluttering hearts, what tearful eyes, did they strive to read Fenton's letter telling the story of Perry's dash to the rescue of the imperilled troopers, of his heroic effort to save poor Schultz's body, of the daring and devotion of Trooper Schramm, of the enthusiastic praise the little detachment lavished on their young lieutenant! Here at least there was no division of sympathy or sentiment. Here at least was Perry the hero of the Indian campaign, the future leader in many another. Stopping only long enough to drop in upon a little coterie of old campaigners, receive their hearty congratulations, and read them the despatches from the seat of war, the veteran colonel left by first train for the far West to meet his boy and to bear to that brave and devoted Prussian trooper the blessings, the gratitude, and the assurance of the fervent prayers of mother and sisters for his own happiness and prosperity for all the years of his life—and beyond.

Four days and nights of ceaseless travel it took the colonel to reach Pawnee. By that time the general with Tintop and the regiment was far to the northeast, straightening out another squabble, the

army as usual acting as buffer between the Indians and the people and getting hard knocks on both sides. By that time Rhett with his command was back at Ransom, and Fenton with the wounded from Slaughter Cove was on the homeward march. They were breaking camp in Pawnee Gorge, thirty miles north of the station, just about the time that No. 3 went whistling down the grade, shooting the sharp curves of Antelope Fork after leaving the colonel to be received by the quartermaster at Pawnee Station. His first question was for news of his boy, who was doing splendidly, said the officer, when they passed Ska Bridge yesterday. "Fenton's going to send him with one or two others ahead in the ambulances this morning. They'll be here before noon. Schramm comes in at the same time, poor fellow. He's got an ugly touch of fever, Dr. French wires, and they want to get him to hospital as soon as possible. The death of his friend Schultz seems to have been a hard blow."

"I wish they'd let me take him home with us," said Colonel Thornton, with glistening eyes. "I know a little woman who followed the drum many a long year with me, and two pretty girls as ever were born under the flag,—if it is their father who says it,—who would be only too happy to spend nights and days for weeks to come nursing that young gentleman back to life. Do you know him at all?"

"Only by sight, sir. He was quite a character at the post, owing to his devotion to Captain Morgan, who helped him out of a close call last year just after he enlisted. They all agree that he is a gentleman by birth and breeding, whom some freak of fortune has landed on our shores. He'd get the Iron Cross at home for this exploit."

"Well, we'll show him here that if we have no decorations to offer, we Americans know how to appreciate heroism and reward it. There's nothing much too good for such a fellow, in our eyes."

An hour later, the sun just peeping up over the eastern verge of the plateau and the colonel and his host being comforted with early coffee, the quartermaster could not help but note how wistfully the old soldier's eyes kept turning to the northern road. An inspiration seized him.

"Look here, colonel, it's going to be a hot day, and those fellows would be glad of a little ice. Suppose we take my buckboard and drive out and meet them?" And Thornton, after the proper amount of hesitancy as to taking an officer away from his duties, gladly assented. So the quartermaster ordered out his team, and by six o'clock they were bowling over the magnificent prairie road, with the sun clambering higher every minute, and with a couple of buckets of ice, blanket-swathed, swinging under the rear axle. Two hours later, rounding a bold shoulder of bluff among the bends of the Pawnee Gorge, they caught sight of white wagon-covers halted at a little clump of willows half a mile ahead. "Hurrah! Yonder they are at the Springs," said the quartermaster.

And there they found them. Two or three soldiers were passing cups of the cool, sparkling water to the fevered hands under the canvas screens. The young doctor, dismounted, catching sight of the coming buckboard, sauntered forward to meet it, in hopes of letters.

One glance at the gray-moustached soldier by the driver's side was enough.

With extended hand he hastened to help him alight, as the quartermaster reined in his braying mules.

"Colonel Thornton, I feel certain," said he. "Yonder's your boy in the ambulance,—jolly as any Mark Tapley you ever heard of." And Thornton, unable at the moment to speak a word, grasped and shook the doctor's hand, bowed his gray head, and passed him by.

"There's a meeting that would disarm the cynicism of a Carlyle," said the doctor, an instant later, though both men turned their backs and looked away, for under the lifted curtain of his trundling litter Perry had peeped and seen his father's face,—the father whom he supposed two thousand miles away.

Just before noon that day, under the doctor's careful supervision, the wounded were being lifted from the wagons and borne beneath the canvas flies stretched for them in the coolest and breeziest part of the quartermaster's guarded corral. Perry, boy-like, had insisted on scrambling out on his feet, partly to show how lively he was, partly that he might be close at hand when there was borne with measured tread and gentle hands the prostrate form of a trooper whose flushed face and twitching hands and glittering eyes proved him to be in the clutch of burning fever. About his litter, anxiety in every look, hovered the colonel and his wounded boy, for there lay gallant Schramm, blind to their solicitude, deaf to any word of cheer.

"I think we can bring him round in a few days of quiet here," said Dr. French, "but quiet we must have."

"Well, sir," said the colonel, decidedly, "we don't leave here until you do. There are mother and sisters hungering at home to get at Perry, but neither my boy nor I can turn a back on a soldier like Schramm. Let me know just what he needs, and every cent we've got is at your service."

"It is a serious fever, I fear," said the doctor, "but what he needs most now is absolute repose. We've got to guard him against disturbance of any kind."

"Do you mean he can't be moved at all, doctor?" asked a man who, with one or two other civilians, had entered the enclosure despite the efforts of the corral-master, who, positive at first in his refusal, had stepped back bewildered at sight of a formidable paper.

"Certainly," said Dr. French, shortly, with the "Who are you?" expression that comes into the faces of the most even-tempered of men when disturbed in the midst of their duties.

"Then we've simply got to camp here till he can be,—me and my party."

"You have? I'd like to know why."

"'Cause I don't mean to lose my position through losing him. Here's my warrant. That man's wanted for the Minden robbery."

XIII.

It was July before the sheriff of Latimer County would have been allowed the undisputed custody of the person of Trooper Schramm, and by that time the sheriff began to wonder whether he really wanted him or not. To begin with, the young German lay at Pawnee for nearly a week in about the hottest fever Dr. French had ever encountered. The infantry went on home to Ransom with most of Thornton's little squad and the wounded, but Colonel Thornton's influence with his old comrade the adjutant-general of the department was amply sufficient to have the doctor and some attendants remain there with his son and Schramm. There were days of delirium in which the young Prussian babbled of the Rhineland, of home and mother, of old days in saddle with the Hussars on the sunny slopes beyond Metz, of mad envy at sight of Bredow's squadrons riding away eastward from the heights of Tronville, down the sheltering ravine, then up the slopes again and, in headlong charge, full on the front of the battling French. Then, exultant, he seemed to hear the longed-for order for his own fellows, to recall the keen soldier rivalry between Uhlan, cuirassier, and hussar as the three regiments "lined up" for their charge, with dragoons and hussars in support, and with the August sun just sinking in the west they swooped down upon the arrayed divisions of Montern and Clerambault to the north of Mars-la-Tour. And then he lived again the perilous hour of his first experience with the Sioux, and poured out his heart in gratitude to the officer who so pluckily saved him. Old Thornton, sitting by his camp cot, his father-heart yearning over his own boy lying in placid slumber close at hand, learned enough to guide him in a letter to the American legation at Berlin,—a soldier father's letter to another soldier father in a foreign land, angered at and estranged from the son of whose very existence, perhaps, he was in doubt. The letter was posted before Thornton heard him babble of other names, and tell of the gnädige Fräulein, Morgan's oldest child, and with grave face the colonel rose and looked at his sleeping boy, and went out upon the breezy prairie, walking for hours before his return. Many things did Schramm mutter and murmur and reveal that Thornton could not understand at all, but he knew enough German to divine much of the soldier's past, and to demand of his son what letter was that he sent to Constance Morgan; whereat Perry, looking much amazed, answered, with all promptitude, "Letter to Connie Morgan? Why, certainly! I wrote to her the second day out from Ransom to tell her what you told me about promotion and to ask her to send us the measures for her father's belt and helmet. The men of the old troop were bound to send him his captain's shoulder-knots, and some one suggested that it might be a pious idea to chip in and order a complete new outfit, helmet and knots and belt and all,—just to surprise him. Some thought he might take offence, but old Tintop swore he shouldn't." And Thornton *père* walked out again. Perry had never lied to him in his life. Would it be fair to ask the boy if he had been making love to Morgan's motherless daughter?

But within the week the crisis was over: Schramm was out of

danger. Mother and sisters were clamoring for Perry at home, so eastward went the colonel and his boy, and presently, by easy stages, westward went Schramm, his escort camping at Alkali, crossing to the north bank and going on to Minden, where camp was made again, and where Mr. Fisk, the agent, came over, ostensibly to see if he could be of any service, and then went back to his office and said to a deputy sheriff that if that was one of the men who came in with the despatch that Friday morning of the 1st of June he'd changed so he couldn't tell him.

Meantime, Rand had been clear around to the agency by the other route, and turned up again at Butte the day Schramm was returned to Ransom. "Don't you disturb him, Mr. Sheriff," said he; "and just take my advice now, don't go too fast on this trail; you may get in so far you can't get back—with credit to yourself." And out at the post the doctor had given strict orders that nobody should breathe in Schramm's hearing what everybody knew,—that he was "wanted" for the Minden robbery. "My first duty is to see him restored to health and strength," said he: "then the law must take its course." And so, with the regiment long miles away, Schramm lay patiently in hospital, tenderly thought for by every one, frequently remembered through the mails by the distant family of Thorntons, promoted corporal of his troop in regimental orders promulgated from head-quarters in the field and read to the whole assembled command both there and here at Ransom, reciting the heroic nature of his conduct in the affair at Slaughter Cove and the skill and bravery with which, his superiors being disabled by wounds, he had conducted the defence. All this was very pleasant to Schramm, whose eyes lighted with joy when Morgan, his captain now, and Jeffers, invalided by wounds, and Treacy ditto, all came in to congratulate him; but the sweetest thing in life to the convalescing soldier was the sight of Connie Morgan's pretty face when, regularly as the day came round, the gnädige Fräulein appeared with some little bunch of wild flowers, some little dainty or cool drink, but always with her gentle voice and soft brown eyes and sweet, serious smile, to ask how the corporal was feeling this bright day. The only trouble now was that he began to get well too fast. His fellow non-commissioned officers, Jeffers and Treacy, limping in one day, said there was a big row among the railway people all over the East. "Riots and ructions" had followed. The militia and police were whipped. The regiment had been whisked in from the field, piled into passenger-cars, and sent away towards Omaha, and they, the wounded of the Indian war, were losing this trip to civilization and beyond. Next day Rhett and his men were suddenly telegraphed for, and again was Captain Morgan both ordnance- and commanding officer.

And then one beautiful day Schramm sent for Mrs. Hinkel and his box, and she, weeping, came to Constance, and together they appealed to Morgan, and then the old man in the new shoulder-straps realized that the matter could no longer be hidden, and before nightfall Schramm learned that he was under the surveillance of the sheriff, charged with being accessory to the robbery of Paymaster Graves, at least to the extent of receiving and concealing a certain part of the money. And

Schramm, speechless with wrath and amaze, stood attention to his captain on the hospital porch, and simply quivered and shook and clinched his hands. Morgan made him sit down, and, prefacing his statement with the assurance that no one who knew him believed him in the faintest way connected with the robbery, went on to say there were certain matters that, unexplained, seemed to point to him with the finger of suspicion. He and Schultz left camp on Bear Fork toward half-past twelve A.M., and though they started back by the trail of the regiment they had probably left it and borne away over to the south so as to ride along the bank of the Ska, in plain view of Minden, ten minutes after the departure of No. 3 and just after the robbery. A Mr. Long had seen two troopers on roans riding briskly west at that time. The operator said the troopers had come in beforehand with the false despatch, and he thought they might have looked like Schultz and Schramm. The paymaster couldn't be sure,—couldn't identify him; but Mr. Lacy, the clerk, had described the two who met them at the train and led them back from the dépôt while he followed in rear, and Lacy's description certainly pointed to them. Then on reaching the garrison Schramm had gone to Mrs. Hinkel, got his box, put a package in it and charged her on no account to let it fall into other hands, and this box the sheriff had opened in presence of the commanding officer, and the first thing found was an envelope containing five hundred dollars in fifties, which Lacy was ready to swear was some of the lot taken from the paymaster's valise. Then they were in town together and hurried away the moment they learned that the robbery was known and soldiers suspected, and instead of returning to the regiment they had turned off and gone away northward through Wagon Gap until met and run back by the Sioux. This, said Morgan, was the case against him as far as he knew.

Schramm's first question was as to the letters and papers: where were they? "Sealed up and safe," said Morgan. "We have the officer's pledge as to that. So is the money sealed up." But Schramm didn't seem to care about the money. That was of little consequence. He could explain at once where it came from. A draft from the old country had reached him early in May at a time when he wished to use money, and Schultz cashed it for him. Schultz would not put his savings in the Butte banks. His money was in Chicago. He had had money sent out to him by express. This could be verified at the express-office, and the draft could doubtless be traced back through Schultz's Chicago banker. As for their taking the Minden road, it was not much longer, they had plenty of time, and the road near the river was prettier. Close to the bridge on the south side they had seen some horses held by one or two men just as the train pulled away. Then away over by the dépôt were some fellows who appeared to be wearing cavalry overcoats, ranchmen probably who were going to drive out some distance, as troopers wouldn't think of wearing overcoats in June. They were interested watching the distant train, however, speeding away westward, and they rode at a brisk lope up the valley, never thinking of the party of men and horses again until that afternoon. Then, hearing of the robbery, it flashed upon them that they

had seen the perpetrators, and back they went, heard of them down the stream drinking and quarrelling among themselves, were close on their trail opposite Wagon Gap, and decided to follow, thinking they might possibly overhaul and recapture some of them, at least, with the result already known. Beyond the Cove they came upon Stearns and his boy racing back for their lives, pursued by Indians. No time to ask questions then. It was fight for life against the common foe. The man was killed before he could tell his story, and now Schultz was gone. Schramm had to face it alone.

"No, not alone," said Morgan. "We believe you guiltless and mean to see you through." And then Colonel Rand came out to see him. What Rand wanted was to know what had been done with the papers, etc., taken from the civilian who died of his wounds at the Cove. All Schultz's effects, of course, were in the hands of the officers whose duty it was to take charge of the papers and property of deceased soldiers. Rand said the boy had been taken to an asylum and was recovering, but had neither money nor papers of any kind. Schramm could hardly be persuaded to sit in the presence of an officer of such distinction as Rand, but succumbed to orders. A wallet with letters and papers and a little money, a silver watch, and a tobacco-box, had been taken from the body before burial. These were all turned over to Captain Fenton when he came. The man's name was Stearns, and his post-office address Minden. And then up jumped Rand with light in his eyes.

"That's what I wanted to know," said he. "I thought I'd seen that poor boy before.—Now, corporal, don't worry about this matter. We could acquit you easily enough, but there's something else to be done. We want to nail the real perpetrators and get that money back if possible: so the trial can't come off just yet."

"But—pardon, colonel," said Schramm, rising again. "May I not my box have? There are letters, portraits,—home-gifts." And Rand said he was going in to see the sheriff then and there.

A month the troops from the plains were kept on duty in and around the railway-centres of the West. Four long weeks the garrison at Ransom consisted of Morgan, the surgeon, the band, the ordnance-sergeant and clerk, quartermaster, employees, and so on, with the hospital steward and attendants, the sick and wounded. Schramm, convalescing rapidly now, was assigned to daily duty at the adjutant's office. Jeffers, still limping a little, with Treacy and others, became the nucleus of a species of running guard, and did patrol and watch duty. The railway company, grateful for the services of the troops in saving their property, sent a sleeper to Butte and an invitation for such of the officers' families as would like to go to Chicago, Omaha, or wheresoever the husband and father might be, as the guests of the road, and many went, and Rand wrote asking for "Connie and the kids" to come on and pay Mrs. Rand a visit, but Connie wouldn't go. Who would take care of daddy? she asked, nestling her face against that veteran's stubbly cheek; and Morgan gave it up.

The sheriff, who had been a frequent visitor, quit coming out to the post, and began to talk around town about the way the fort people

had behaved from the start in this robbery business. He would have had the robbers at the time, only the cavalry had interfered. He and his posse would have nabbed those fellows skipping for Tomahawk Range if it hadn't been that those d—d meddlers of troopers drove them beyond his jurisdiction. The Tomahawk was the name given the black-fringed spur that came down from the mountains west of Wagon Gap almost to the valley of the Ska. It was famous for bear, elk, and black-tail deer, and all its length, except a few miles at the southern end, lay within the Sioux reservation, and no one could go thither to shoot except by previous arrangement with the agency people. Nevertheless old Stearns, the recent victim of Sioux vengeance, had for more than a year kept a shooting-box somewhere in the mountains, where with his half-witted boy he lived a hermit life, coming down to Minden very seldom, yet frequently being seen about the agency at the north. Keen sportsmen of Omaha, Yankton, and Sioux City, it was said, sometimes made up hunting-parties, and, having properly and previously "fixed" the Sioux chiefs through agency interpreters, went up by way of the Indian villages and, with Indian guides, had many a day of famous shooting, and came home, the envied of their kind, with a baggage-car-load of carcasses they could not always even give away. The strikes and riots ended, it suddenly occurred to Colonel Rand that he hadn't shot a bear in years, so he went up around by the all-rail route, taking a couple of friends, and such was his enthusiasm that he could not hear enough about what other parties had been doing in that line. Game-laws did not obtain on Indian lands in those days, except such as the Indian and his keepers agreed upon, and even late in May, it seems, some eager sportsmen had come out from the Missouri and gone into the Tomahawk Range, guided by a clerk in the agency and "Lame Johnny," a half-bred Sioux. For a man so interested at the start, it must be owned that Rand tired rather soon of the sport. He left his friends at the agency after a day or two of desultory shooting, and went back to head-quarters.

Then the troops began to reappear at their old station, as their services were no longer needed; and the August suns were beating hot and dry on the valley of the Ska; and presently Old Tintop and the Eleventh were once more restored to Ransom, and began the work of straightening out their quarters and stables, and the new first lieutenant of Troop D saluted his predecessor, its present captain, and Schramm blushingly invited his brother non-commissioned officers, all who could be spared, one evening after their duties at the post to meet him at Conway's restaurant in town, where a bountiful supper was provided, and where each man was regaled with such drink as he most fancied, and where Schramm in a very effective little speech proposed the health of their new captain, which they drank with cheers, and the memory of their gallant comrade Schultz, which they honored in soldier silence. Nothing like this had happened in the annals of the regiment. "Why, it must have cost him sixty or seventy dollars," said Sergeant Bowman, as they rode back to the post that night. One of their number in jocular mood thought it appropriate to ask Schramm

had he been "holding up" another paymaster, or was this what was left of the last one? whereat Schramm looked his interrogator full in the face a few seconds without so much as changing color or saying a word, and then, turning calmly away, resumed his chat with their first sergeant, who as the senior guest at the feast was placed at the right hand of their host. It was evident that Schramm would have no witticism on that head.

But if Schramm took it in dignified silence, the sheriff did not. It grew to be the popular thing for the troopers just then to hail this magnate with the query, "Hullo, sheriff, when's the trial coming off?" The "boys," as they sometimes called themselves, had much resented it that the officials and the public were so ready to accept the theory that only members of the Eleventh Cavalry could have planned and perpetrated the deed. Hence, as time wore on and the evidence against Schultz and Schramm wore off and the sheriff seemed drifting further from a solution of the mystery, the boys took keener delight in chaffing the civil authority on the public streets and inspiring him to mighty blasphemy and portentous threat.

"You fellows had better keep civil tongues in your heads," said he, with many a lurid expletive, the night after the Schramm supper. "You may think it d—d smart to chaff about this. Perhaps you soldiers can turn to now and catch the fellers that ran off with your money. If it wasn't soldiers that did it, by —, I'll lay any bet no soldier can say who else done it."

A week later, however, when the story of the sheriff's wager, "with weeping and with laughter," was being told at Ransom in connection with the liveliest episode in Ransom annals, there fell from the oracular lips of Mrs. Whaling, the relict of a former commanding officer and now a prominent figure in Butte society, the memorable words, "Well, I guess he wishes he hadn't been so precipitous."

XIV.

Pay-day at the post! Old Curran had ordered an extra stand put up in the bar-room, an extra load of keg beer out from Butte, and a choice supply of *cabbageros* for the defenders of their country's flag, who on these occasions deemed it their duty not to be seen out of ranks without a weed in their teeth, no matter how high in price nor how low in grade. The laundresses, arrayed in their best bib and tucker and smiles, had spread the cloth in their shanties down under the hill, with the bucket of punch and dozen of tumblers in readiness for callers,—it being one of the unwritten laws of the rank and file in the good old days to square with the laundress if you didn't square with anybody else. The non-commissioned staff, the band, and the troops had all been ordered to hold themselves in readiness,—the one function of the military year in which such orders were totally unnecessary, even the sick in hospital manifesting a strong desire to get up and go to duty, on that day at least; and Lieutenant Phipps with twenty troopers had met Paymaster Graves as he and Mr. Lacy stepped

forth from No 3, bustled them into the waiting ambulance and around the corner to the express-office, where they receipted for the little iron safe, and then at spanking trot set forth across the prairie and were deposited at the hospitable door of Old Tintop, where breakfast awaited the major, where his safe was stored *pro tempore* under the vigilant eye of the officer of the guard, while Mr. Lacy, pleading previous engagement, begged to be excused and went to take his sustenance under the Currans' roof. Guard was mounted in full-dress uniform at the usual hour, everybody being out for to see, and Gray being in his glory. Even more than usually jubilant and stirring were the strains of the band as, to the rollicking airs from "Arrah na Pogue," the yellow-crested column came swinging around in review, for it was "Cavalry Day,"—one of Tintop's fads being that it spoiled the ceremony and ruined the guard to have foot and troopers march on together. "Uniform, arms, and manual are all unlike," said he, "so what's the use? They no more mix than oil and vinegar: we're the oil and you're the vinegar." And so, being a favorite at department head-quarters, the old fellow had been sustained in his idea of having alternate guard, cavalry one day and infantry the next,—a system which worked in with the "percentage" fairly well and which the colonel pronounced a triumphant success, "and anybody who don't believe it had better not say so."

Then, right after guard-mounting, in their full-dress uniforms, with gloves and side-arms, the garrison was paraded for payment. Graves sat beside a table in the administration room, big stacks of greenbacks,—tens, five, twos, and ones,—and cylindrical columns of silver and nickel, in front of him. Off to his left, muster- and pay-roll of the first detachment, head-quarters staff, and band open on the table before him, his keen eyes glancing about the room and studying every face, sat Lacy. The adjutant took a seat at another little table, midway between the paymaster and the door, with his duplicate roll, and, all being ready, called the sergeant-major's name. Mr. Lacy called out the amount due. The paymaster rapidly counted out the money and handed it to the soldier who stood attention in front of the desk. The staff and band were speedily settled with and sent about their business. Then came the senior captain with his company, a change of rolls, and so for three hours, without incident of any kind, the interesting yet monotonous ceremony went on. Not until near noon did it come the turn of the captain youngest in commission at the post, and then at last D Troop came swinging across the parade from their barracks, and gray-haired Morgan took the little table just left vacant by Captain Prime. The windows were open, and a soft air was blowing through, and yet it seemed hot and oppressive.

"This is the last company, is it?" said Graves. "Thank God! I'm about tired out now. All ready, captain?"

"All ready, sir," answered Morgan, and then called "First Sergeant Warren."

A buggy drove up in front of the office, and some of the men nudged one another. It was the sheriff who alighted, followed by Colonel Rand. Behind them came another, and a deputy or two in

the saddle. D Troop, standing at ease along the gallery in front of the administration building and from there to the walk leading to the gate, exchanged remarks in an undertone as to the cause of this sudden and suspicious arrival, but no one within the building apparently took notice thereof. A long hall ran through the building from east to west. The men entered the room by the door at the east end, and, receiving their pay, passed out through the other, and so to the rear porch. The paymaster and his clerk sat facing the door at the eastward end of the big room, with their backs to the northern windows, and so took no note of a party passing around on that side of the building. Several officers, clerks, etc., were grouped about the room west of the pay-table, and these were presently reinforced by the new arrivals,—Rand entering, followed by the sheriff and others, but signalling to the officers who greeted him to make no unnecessary to-do. By this time Morgan had read down among the names of his corporals. Rand, quietly suppressing the greetings accorded him, made it known that he wished to listen a moment. Corporal Treacy had just picked up his money, faced to his left, and made room for the next man. "Corporal Hugo V. Schramm," called the captain, and, straight as an arrow, quick, lithe, soldier all over, in stepped the man of Slaughter Cove, hand at visor in salute as he halted. Lacy glanced quickly, curiously up and studied the clear-cut face an instant with his steely blue eyes, then as quickly dropped them. Graves, too, looked up in mingled interest and embarrassment. Here stood the soldier virtually branded by him and his as a robber, yet pronounced by officers and comrades a hero. Graves felt that his first impulse was to hold forth his hand, but it occurred to him that that would hardly be in accordance with military propriety and etiquette. "I should like to see you, corporal, after we finish," said he, in a most conciliatory tone. Schramm thrust his money into the palm of his left-hand glove, saluted precisely, and, merely saying, "Yes, sir," strode away to the west door, but there his name was called in low tone and he halted. An officer beckoned to him to wait, and, wondering not a little, he stopped, then turned to a vacant corner behind Rand.

Rapidly the list was finished, the last man paid. The paymaster stretched his legs and arms and looked around for some one to suggest an adjournment to the club-room, and the first thing he saw was Rand, with the sheriff in his trail, and Graves's eyes began to dilate. Lacy was repacking coin and paper money at the instant and bending over a leather satchel which he had placed on his chair. A strange and sudden silence had fallen upon the crowded room. Old Tintop from his office across the hall, with faithful Gray at his elbow, came lounging to the door, and, catching sight of the civilian garb, stopped short and glared. Lacy, just snapping the clasp of his bag, felt the sudden fall of a muscular hand on his shoulder, and, with a perceptibly violent start, looked up. The bearded face of Colonel Rand was close at his side, the dark eyes sternly fixed upon him, and Lacy turned ashen and his limbs began to tremble and quiver, despite his fiercest effort, for there confronting him stood the sheriff of Latimer County, a pair of steel wristlets in his extended hands.

XV.

The sensation caused by the arrest of Mr. Lacy, the paragon of paymasters' clerks, as he had been described in one of his letters of recommendation, ended not with the going down of the sun that day, nor many thereafter. Graves himself sat in a state bordering on collapse for a few hours after the occurrence.

"Why, that gentleman was recommended by half the Senate, and almost insisted on by my bondsmen," said he, with tears in his eyes. "What will they say to me? Why, Rand, he actually had to be named as my clerk before I could be confirmed at all." To which the imperturbable inspector-general responded, "Yes, no doubt. You see, Graves, they had to get him out of Washington: he knew too much;" and when Graves besought him to say why he suspected the paragon, Rand serenely answered he didn't: he *had* suspected him a month ago, perhaps, but now he *knew:* so should everybody else just as soon as the case could be brought to trial. But meantime other entertainment was provided for the cavalry. Even while Lacy was frantically sending telegrams and letters to officials of high degree all over the East, demanding investigation, vindication, etc., there came an order for the immediate detachment of three of Tintop's companies to take the field far to the northwest. D Troop went as a matter of course. This time Schramm did not have to ask "to go along mit dem fellers." It was their veteran captain who was left behind.

Just as Perry Thornton had told his father, the men of the troop, thankful for, yet declining, the proffered subscription of the officers, had ordered from the East as handsome an outfit of belt, helmet, spurs, shoulder- and sabre-knots, as money could buy, Connie alone of the household being in the secret. Her father never again had asked to see Thornton's letter, and she, who once had been so insistent, ceased all mention of it or of its writer. The glow of delight with which the child had received and read that jolly, warm-hearted, yet utterly unsentimental note had opened the father's eyes no more than it had her own. Constance Morgan stepped from girl- to womanhood in the day and hour which taught her how, little by little, there had been kindled in her heart a tiny flame of tenderness that burned as incense at the altar,—an offering at the shrine wherein the boy sat installed, the hero of a girl's imaginative and impulsive nature. With what burning cheeks did she own it to herself! With what womanly shame did she realize that she had betrayed it ere she herself fairly knew of its existence! She!—an army girl, a soldier's daughter, with Lot and Billy to look after, with dear old daddy to nurse and comfort,—she, Constance Morgan, daring to indulge in idle day-dreaming over a boy in his first uniform! It was simply shameful. She could have scratched the eyes out of any woman who saw her poring over that letter, had there been any there to see. She raged within herself to think that for that moment she had been blind and deaf to her father's presence and lost in reading Thornton's laughing words. No one on earth ever knew what pangs of maidenly wrath and shame "Little Mother" endured for several days, but whenever after that initial exhibition

Morgan looked for further symptom of sentimental regard for the absent lieutenant, he failed entirely, and wished that he might write himself an ass for ever having believed it.

The presentation came off at the assembly-room one lovely evening in July, Sergeant Jeffers being spokesman for the troop and utterly routing Morgan, who knew not how to formulate reply to words so rich with soldierly trust and affection. Close behind the speaker stood Corporal Schramm, his glistening eyes fixed on Connie's beautiful, blushing face, with its swimming eyes, for Jeffers's voice was tremulous when he went on to say how for ten long years the old hands had soldiered under Morgan and never once could recall a harsh or an unjust word, never once a day when his voice or heart or hand had failed them when they looked to him for leadership or aid. The old fellow was worn and ill and heavily laden, and this unlooked-for tribute from his men completely floored him. "Why, men," he stammered, "I—always stood by you as a matter of course. I never dreamed of doing anything else. What's an officer for, if it isn't to be a friend and leader to his own troop first of all? I'm more obliged to you than you can imagine. This isn't strictly according to law and regulations, I am afraid, and if I'd got wind of it in any way before, I should have stopped it; but precedents seem to be plenty of late, and I only wish I might think it would be my luck to wear them as your captain for years to come, but your old lieutenant makes an older captain, and I'm soon to step aside for a younger soldier and better man; but so long as I live, men, this gift of yours and these words of Jeffers's will—will—— God bless you all, lads, I can't finish it."

And then the men in their full-dress uniforms had escorted their captain and Connie and the invited guests homeward that night, and the first thing when father and daughter were left alone old Morgan turned to Connie.

"So that was what Thornton's letter was about, was it, Connie?"

"Certainly, father," she replied, looking straight into his eyes with those clear brown orbs of hers. "What else could it have been?" And that was the last mentioned of the subject between them.

Each and every one, the men had shaken hands with their captain and pledged his health in the foaming beer old Curran had insisted on "setting up" for the occasion. They swore, soldier-like, they'd never let the captain retire; but that was a matter beyond their jurisdiction. Wind and weather and many a worry laid the veteran by the heels, and his old enemy, rheumatism, took fresh and forcible hold. When D Troop rode away to take the field, poor Morgan was groaning both in flesh and spirit, and when late that autumn Schramm came posting homeward under subpœna to testify *in re* The People *vs.* Lacy, the chevrons of a sergeant decked his sleeves in recognition of a ride of over a hundred miles through Indian-haunted wilds to bear despatches to a distant command, but neither captain nor Connie was there to bid him welcome. The lonely grave out on the prairie lacked the bunch of wild flowers which formerly decked it every Sunday morning. The old quarters down the row were peopled by strangers to the German soldier now. The sweet face of the gnädige Fräulein smiled no more

from the dormer window over the veranda: the Morgans, one and all, were gone. A retiring board had pronounced the old dragoon unfit for further service, and with his own fuel and quarters to furnish now as best he could, with no more medical attendance or supplies from Uncle Sam, with all the brood to feed and clothe and educate, without a word of aid or welcome from the kinsfolk in the East, poor Morgan meekly took his discharge and his retired pay, and a tiny two-storied cottage in an out-of-the-way street in Butte, and strove to set up housekeeping with Connie at the head and a Chinese man-of-all-work at the foot of the new establishment. Rand had been to see them and urged their all coming eastward awhile as his guests at home, but the railroad company had offered Morgan a little berth which he considered it his duty to accept at once, and Connie scouted the idea of her being in need of rest or change; she could not think of leaving father; and within the month it seemed as though her vision were preternaturally clear, for presently poor Morgan could not leave the house at all. It was at this stage of the proceedings that as Connie, broom in hand, and an old silk handkerchief over her head, was sweeping out the hall one sharp October morning, the Chinaman having been discharged as the result of a strike for more wages and less work, she sent a whirl of dust upon the glistening boots of a statuesque trooper with hand at salute and blue eyes beaming in delight at sight of his friend the captain's daughter.

"Oh, Schr-r-r-amm!" she cried, throwing down her besom and joyously grasping his gauntleted hand. "Where did you come from? Come right in; papa will be so glad!—Here's Schramm—Sergeant Schramm, daddy dear;" and, first closing the outer door, she opened that which led to the Den, and ushered the sergeant in and watched with glistening eyes the greeting of the two soldiers. Schramm must stay and take luncheon with them. "We are no longer on duty, lad," said Morgan, with a sad smile, "and if you'll have a bite with us and tell us all about the old troop it'll be a comfort." And Connie's eyes and lips were even more insistent. Off came the blue overcoat, and there in all the glossy sheen of the new, snug-fitting blouse, with the triple bars of his sergeant's chevrons, the athletic frame of their soldier guest stood revealed, and they made him sit, and Connie poured his tea and bustled in and out of the kitchen, and Schramm sat with his old captain and talked by the hour of the troop, and how well Jeffers held his own now as first sergeant, and what a fine soldier Treacy was, and yet—he did not say how or why, but fast as their term of service expired the old hands took their discharge, and then "took on" in some other troop. And all the time he talked, whensoever she flitted in or out or by, the blue eyes would follow and were full of light and reverence and watchful care. It was as he walked slowly away, two hours later, eagerly promising to come again, that those same blue eyes were clouded with deep anxiety,—Morgan was failing so fast.

The trial, he told them, was to begin forthwith; but it never did. In some of Lacy's appealing letters to former employers in official station in Washington reference was made to the malignant hatred

of Colonel Rand as the inspiration of all their proofless and damnable accusations, and these getting to the War Department and so coming to Rand for remark, the placid colonel finally waxed indignant. It was bad enough, said he, that Lacy should be an expert thief and blackleg, but that to cover his own tracks and those of his pals he should seek the ruin of innocent men was rather too much of a good thing. Then the general came back from the field about this time; Rand made his report, and on went a four-page letter to Washington reciting briefly the evidence now in their possession as affecting Lacy. This was shown to the ex-clerk's friends at court, and two letters from the East, after being opened and examined by the sheriff, were handed in to Lacy's cell the day after Schramm's arrival. That night the prisoner asked for more paper and permission to write till late, and when morning came the neatly-folded document proved to be the final statements of the clerk who had cashed so many papers of that name within the past year—but would cash no more. What was left of Lacy lay stiffening on the narrow cot. The night-watch had not even heard him groan.

A fellow of much inventive genius was Lacy, and of uncommon usefulness until luck turned. Cards, mining stocks, wheat, wine, and women all combined against him. He had to cover the money abstracted to pay his losses and put up more margins. He owed still more, and his creditors, gamblers like himself, said, "Pay or we peach." There was just one way to "raise the wind" without reaping the whirlwind: the paymaster must be robbed on the very next trip; and the plan was to have the train "held up," until the sudden move of the cavalry suggested an easier way. Out went two of his sportsmen friends with letters of introduction to the hunter hermit in the Tomahawk Range. Down they went with him as their guide and companion and scout. Cavalry overcoats and slouch-hats and equipments such as were worn in the field in those days were to be had almost anywhere. Armed with their bogus despatch, they rode to Minden, dodging Sergeant Dolan's escort from Bear Fork to Alkali. Leaving their horses with the boy at the bridge, the three men received the paymaster and Lacy at the station to which he had been lured, and the rest was easy until it came to getting away with the money. The hermit forbade their returning by way of his hut, as they would be trailed thither and he and his boy instantly suspected. They must go farther east, by way of Wagon Gap, and back to the agency with their game, as though from innocent and successful hunt. But, in dodging the troops and certain couriers they saw, time was lost, in which they got to drinking and quarrelling. Lacy's friends were two well-known contractors for Indian supplies, long accustomed to agency ways, well versed in Indian affairs, and often suspected of being knaves of deeper dye than mere swindlers of the aborigines, which species of crime was not bereft of virtue in frontier eyes. They were known to the trade by the names of Stein and Wirtz, and their intimacy with Lacy and certain employees of the quartermaster department had attracted Rand's attention to them months before the robbery. Hearing of their absence from town, he traced them to the agency, thence to the range

beyond, and found that the date of their return that way corresponded exactly with that of Thornton's fight. Young Stearns had at last made a coherent statement. Promising to give his luckless father his share as soon as they got back within sight of that harbor of refuge, but plying him with liquor all the time, these men rode to Fossil Creek in company, then gave their dozing guide the slip and dashed rapidly ahead. Being aware of the Indian outbreak, they probably studied the country with their glasses and saw the commotion among the distant war-parties, and so dodged into the range away from the road, and by a wide détour got safely in, while their hapless guide, following in drunken pursuit, ran foul of the Sioux, was chased and killed. Wisely they hid such of the money as they did not need at the moment, and kept away from head-quarters and Lacy awhile, until the announcement in the papers that the crime had been definitely fixed on the soldiers Schultz and Schramm gave them courage to unearth their plunder and fetch it nearer home. Not that they intended to divide with Lacy by any means,—he was in their toils now, and could be further bled,—but to hold him with mingled threat and promise. And all the time Rand was weaving his web about them. The more coherent statements of the half-witted son, now being gradually restored to such intellect as he possessed, had given ample clue, and the arrest of Lacy at Ransom was the result of a despatch to Rand that his confederates had been pounced upon the previous night at Yankton with over ten thousand dollars of the stolen money in their possession. So long as they did not peach, however, Lacy was still safe, and he played the indignant and wronged and faithful servant, and played it well, for just six weeks; then "Dux femina facti"—the woman who was leader—by the nose—of the triumvirate, and the recipient of much of their stolen plunder, was also arrested when on the wing to the East, and—she couldn't keep a secret; her circumstantial confession of the whole business from beginning to end, made when hoping to win exemption for herself, ended the battle. Then Lacy's own hand penned his parting words and freed his shame-stricken soul.

"It was a well-planned job," said Rand, "on Lacy's part at least, but it had its leak so long as there was a woman in it."

And now, as his evidence was no longer needed, Sergeant Schramm had no further business at either Butte or Ransom. "But you don't want to go back that long distance alone," said Old Tintop. "We can assign you to duty here until your troop comes home next month." And, to the adjutant's infinite surprise, Schramm eagerly assented.

October went, and keener winds from the mountain-gorges and fiercer twinges in Morgan's legs reminded them that winter was at hand. Often now the post surgeon found means to ride over to Butte and see the failing soldier, and many a day officers or their wives contrived to visit town and dropped in to see Connie and offer aid and comfort to her father, but Connie declared she needed no help. She had an excellent servant now, a German woman whom Mrs. Hinkel brought to her, who cooked and washed and did almost everything for so small a sum that when the amount was mentioned I fear me

there were women who were sorely tempted to offer the paragon twice as much to quit the Morgans and come to them, but they deserved the more honor that they promptly dismissed the unworthy thought. Connie said Mrs. Hinkel, too, was kind and useful in making things for the children, and Miss Franzen of the public school, who lived in the next block, took such interest in Lot and Billy and taught them so much. Why, they would really be in clover, were poor father only better. And then one evening when Schramm had ridden into town and left his horse at the Empire and had come promptly around to see the Herr Rittmeister, he was amazed to find a tall, gray-moustached, soldierly man seated by the captain's side, while there—right by Connie—in civilian dress stood a tall, slender young fellow at sight of whom the sergeant's eyes clouded, and he would have retired, but was too late, for with one leap Perry Thornton had him by the hand.

"Schramm, by all that's glorious! Father, look here!" And before the Prussian ex-hussar could realize it, a veteran colonel of dragoons was wringing one of his hands, while the lieutenant clasped the other. Nor would they or the Morgans let him go.

"I have a letter from Berlin which I am charged to give you, Herr von Rhetz," said Thornton *père*, and at the name Schramm's lips quivered and twitched and he turned very white, but straight in the colonel's kindly face looked the unflinching eyes of blue.

Yet even then he would have asked to be permitted to retire,—the soldier in him shrinking from what he deemed intrusion, and a strange restless gnawing at his heart impelling him to go and leave them to the joy of a reunion in which no doubt he had really no place,—but, one and all, they forbade. Constance held in her hands two cabinet photographs, and Perry stepped forward, took one of these, and, holding it forth, said to Schramm,—

"If you need more reason, sergeant, here it is, for this is the picture of a young lady who says she must have yours, and quickly too."

"The young lady is most gracious, Herr Lieutenant,—and most beautiful," said Schramm, studying it attentively; then, glancing up, "The lieutenant's sister?"

"Not quite," laughed Perry, blushing, "though that's what my sisters are beginning to call her—rather prematurely."

And then in his perplexity Schramm gazed past the handsome boy and sought Connie's face. It was beaming. "Pardon," he said, "I am so dull. Does the lieutenant mean it is his betrothed?"

"Yes, and we are here to drink her health,—we five."

For one moment Schramm's eyes sought doubtfully the eyes of the maiden who stood there so unflinchingly and smilingly before them, and then his hand went out in earnest.

XVI.

A winter of unusual severity was that which followed upon the heels of a summer campaign that had been full of lively excitement for Tintop and the regiment. Once more, however, the spirit of

social gayety was abroad, and the Christmas holidays were merry with many a charming function. Hops, germans, dinners and luncheon-parties, theatricals, minstrels, and soldier balls, day after day and night after night, were in full career at Ransom, while dense and blinding snow-storms blocked the roads and soon succeeded in making the trip from fort to town more of a venture than the winter passage of the Atlantic. Starting from town with sunshine and sleigh-bells, one might encounter storm and tempest before half the distance was traversed. December, though sharply cold, had been bright and beautiful until about the 15th; then came the succession of blizzards that cut communication almost entirely and caused a wail of dismay from the shopkeepers of Butte, most of whom had laid in goodly store of toys and trinkets for the delectation of their best customers, the people out at the fort. The stage had to be taken off, and for days the mails were carried to and fro in saddle. The doctors, senior and junior, found plenty to do at the fort and little to tempt them elsewhere, so their visits to Morgan became infrequent. There was just one man at the post whom no gale could daunt, no storm could conquer, and that was Schramm.

Every one knew that Morgan was slowly growing feebler. "He ought to have gone to the Hot Springs long ago," said the doctor, "but now it is too late." He could not stand the journey without special attendants and accommodations, and those were things he could not, and Uncle Sam would not, pay for. Knowing that he would have nothing to leave, and deeming him near dissolution, his creditors were hounding him again. If he lived, the fifty dollars per month would gradually pay them off, but if he died there was nothing: hence the renewed clamor for immediate settlement. The weather was bitter, the little house cold and draughty, fuel was horribly expensive, and there was the veteran dragoon, a helpless cripple, looking death in the face and imploring him yet a little while to hold his hand, not that the broken-spirited soldier might recover his strength,—he was past all that,—but that he might linger on even in labor and sorrow, that with his annuity he might save his children from utter destitution. Hours he sat in loneliness, for it was impossible, save at rare intervals, for his old comrades to reach him now. He wondered how Connie could sing so happily about the house. Surely she and Bertha, the middle-aged maid-of-all-work, had accomplished wonders with the little sum he could devote to household expenses. Lot and Billy looked hearty and rosy and well fed and clothed when they came tumbling noisily in from school. Connie's sweet face and slender form were rounder. The dark circles under the big brown eyes were gone. Here he was, hardly daring to eat, thinking how soon they might be left without bite, sup, or cent. Yet Connie smiled and sang, and was picking up little household words and phrases in German, and blushingly accosted Schramm in his native tongue when Schramm came, as he rarely failed to come, twice, thrice, or oftener during the week, to pay his respects to the gnädige Fräulein, and to see what he could do for the Herr Rittmeister, who, ever since the day of the Thorntons' coming, had vainly protested against the further use of the name Schramm, had insisted that the time

had come for the German sergeant to drop his punctilious observance of the deference due all superior officers, and had informed Connie that he should be addressed as Herr von Rhetz; but it was all to no purpose. Schramm forbade. "I left my name with my past when I came to enlist in this army," said he. "I had to win a future for myself, and so took my mother's name meantime. Call me by that so long as I wear the blue." Indeed, he couldn't bear to have the gnädige Fräulein address him as "sergeant" at all. He said that from the first he loved to watch her lips as she struggled with the combination that finally gave utterance to a Sch-r-r-ramm. There could be no question that he loved to watch her lips, no matter what she might be saying, and small blame to him either.

But out at Ransom Schramm was becoming a notability in earnest. Despite his plea to Colonel Thornton to keep secret as yet the story of his difference with his stern old father, his retirement from the German service, his practical banishment from home, and then the proffered forgiveness and reconciliation, there were so many suspicions that the Thorntons were plied with questions they could not altogether dodge. Every one knew by this time Schramm had money in plenty, and that it was deposited in a German bank in the East. "Yes," said Thornton, "that was his mother's fortune, which had become his own;" but the colonel refused to tell more, saying the soldier had a perfect right to serve out his time as Schramm and nothing else. Everybody saw, however, the courtesy and distinction with which the Thorntons, father and son, treated him,—Perry, in fact, waxing hot and wanting to fight an ill-conditioned, cross-grained subaltern who sneered at him. Schramm's box was kept in the vault of the First National now, where the cashier and other officials would fain have treated him with greater deference than they showed his officers, had Schramm permitted it. He would never enter the bank when an officer was there, and should one happen in, even the veriest cub in the whole garrison, Schramm would spring back from the counter and stand attention and at salute, never presuming to come forward again until the shoulder-straps had vanished. This naturally gave umbrage to the public, which, very properly, preferred moneyed sergeants to mortgaged subs, but no one at the post could truthfully say that Schramm ever in the faintest way failed in the respect and deference due his superiors in grade.

On the other hand, there were those who saw that Schramm's new captain was taking frequent opportunity to treat the young German with scant courtesy; it was apparent from the moment of the return of the troop from the field. They had already begun the homeward march when Schramm was ordered by Tintop to await their return to head-quarters, but Captain Bragg declared that Schramm had shirked his duty with the troop. The medal of honor awarded him was presented by Tintop and pinned on Schramm's breast in presence of the whole command, and Bragg sneered at the colonel's commendatory remarks, and sneered again in Thornton's presence as the troop marched in from parade. Perry was already disgusted with having to serve longer in D Troop, but no transfer could be obtained. Schramm's duties in barracks and stables were most scrupulously performed, but

never to the extent of winning expression of satisfaction from Bragg. Schramm rarely asked to be excused from duty, but often put in for a pass to go to town. There was no good reason for refusing so good a man, so Bragg growled and grumbled, and finally said he couldn't have his horses ridden all over creation, and Schramm must walk thereafter or hire a coach-and-four. Schramm never by word or sign showed irritation. He received the blunt, ill-natured reply with silent salute. He hired Curran's buggy, and then, an evening or two thereafter, just before stables, came loping back from Butte on a splendid bay, Lieutenant Edwards's favorite horse, which that officer had vainly asked three hundred for when he needed money to go East on sick-leave, and failing to obtain his price had sent him to the Empire stables in town. Schramm, it transpired, had bought the entire "outfit," equipments and all, but had the bridle and housings stored and replaced by modest black leather and dark blue blanket. Bragg forbade his keeping the horse in the troop stables, and Schramm, flushing slightly, replied, with the utmost self-command and respect, that he could not presume to think of such a thing. Mr. Curran had kindly consented to take charge of his horse in his private stable, where Schramm, you may depend upon it, paid roundly for forage and grooming. Then it next transpired that Schramm had named his new acquisition "Rand," and, as Rand in his capacity as inspector-general had frequently rapped Bragg over the knuckles, this gave greater offence to Bragg. Then a famous opera-company, crossing the continent, struck a blizzard and were snow-bound in a special car at Butte. There was a big hall with a fair-sized stage in town. The owner urged a performance, and the manager agreed to give "Faust" on a guarantee that took the owner's breath away. He braved the drifts, however, and galloped out to the fort and told his story. "Go ahead," said Tintop. "You shall have the band, and we'll all take seats." But when he heard the price, Tintop retracted. "We can't stand the figure—that is, I can't, and few of my officers can." Nevertheless the owner found means to give the front row of the gallery, all around, at a reduced rate, and there the fort contingent looked down on the two-dollar seats in the so-called parquet, and just before the overture began in marched forty sergeants, cavalry, infantry, and staff, from Ransom, each man in his nattiest dress uniform, and took possession of the rows of chairs reserved for them, and after the opera was over did these non-commissioned officers adjourn to Conway's, where another bountiful supper was spread in his big room, and then back to the fort in the dawn of the frosty morning to the tune of soldier songs and merry sleigh-bells. "Schramm's stag-party" was the talk of the post for a week thereafter. Bragg thought it an outrage that enlisted men should be allowed to sit in public entertainment in presence of their betters. Tintop, on the contrary, said he was proud to see so many of his men intelligent, soldierly, and so thoroughly capable of appreciating such music and such a company. As for the opera people and the local manager, they were enraptured. Connie, you may be sure, was there to see. She and her friend Miss Franzen had been brought thither and taken home in a carriage from the Empire, and invited and

escorted by the principal of the public school, to whom, it transpired later, tickets as well as instructions had been sent beforehand, and it was just about this time, just before Christmas, that somebody started the new name for the blue-eyed Prussian, and Schramm, to his manifest concern, was hailed as "Sergeant Crœsus."

The snow blockade was such that many children at the fort lost their faith in Santa Claus. He who rode the snow-drifts and the storm was barred at Ransom, yet seemed to swoop in force on Morgan's fireside. Brand-new sleds were there for Lot and Billy, and another doll, and such stacks of furniture and boxes of leaden soldiers, besides valuables of more practical sort. All these, together with fruits and candies to be stuffed in their worn stockings, had been smuggled in through the kitchen and the connivance of Bertha, and with them were some costly books, Schramm's gifts to his honored captain and brown-eyed Connie. He dared not offer half what his heart longed to lay before them. They had a Christmas dinner, too, that Bertha swore was her own production and inspiration. They had remembrances from the fort that Schramm "packed" in on horseback. Perry Thornton and others had by no means forgotten them, and Schramm had blushingly called upon such kind friends to say he should be only too glad to carry in anything they might wish to send. There was no lack of Christmas cheer, even where one heart was so heavy as poor Morgan's, and no one was allowed to dream how very much of all this holiday feasting was due to Schramm. And so all through the long hard winter, patient and reserved, assiduous in every duty at the fort, yet finding frequent opportunity of visiting his friends in Butte, Schramm held his way. Old Hinkel was made an ordnance sergeant along in March, and with his wife and olive-branches took departure for a far southern post, Schramm seeing them to the train and receiving tearful warmth of blessing from the honest frau by way of good-by, and in April the doctors made more frequent trips to town, for Morgan rallied but little with the lengthening days. It was evident that no bill of relief could bring lasting benefit here.

But, despite pain and hopelessness, Morgan clung to life with great determination. Live he must for the babies' sakes, he said, and once more now his days were brightened by visits from old friends, once more in the sunny afternoons Perry Thornton dropped in for checkers and campaigns or to show a new picture of his lady-love, Connie sometimes sitting contentedly by, but generally busying herself with Bertha about the house. And then, just as was sure to happen, came the order for summer's work. "Away to the Big Horn!" said the colonel, as he reined up one day at Morgan's open door, catching Schramm in the act of blocking out a flower-garden for Lot and Billy. And that evening before parade the regimental adjutant, seated at his desk, was surprised by a visit from Sergeant Schramm, who begged of that influential officer a few moments' interview.

"Young man," said Tintop to his staff officer, as he espied the latter tripping around from the club-room just before first call, "that's the third time I've seen you coming out of Curran's since four o'clock." To which Gray promptly replied,—

"Yes, sir. You see, last week you remarked upon my going in there so often that I thought it time to reverse the process." And this afforded the colonel the opportunity of giving Gray the good raking down he deserved, and, just as Gray had hoped and planned, brought on the reaction that always followed an outburst. That evening Tintop came over to the office to "make it up," and then, when the skies were cleared, Gray broached the subject of Schramm's interview. It seems he wanted a fortnight's furlough to go to New York and other points on urgent personal business, and had reason to know that Bragg would forward the application disapproved; and Bragg did. Bragg's endorsement read, "This young soldier has been the recipient of so many indulgences already as to seriously impair his usefulness as a sergeant. He succeeded in evading field duty with the troop last fall, and seeks to shirk it again. For a man not yet two years in service, he has been promoted over older and more deserving men so rapidly as to turn his head." And Tintop considered the whole thing a reflection on him as regimental commander, and so sent for Bragg and so told him, and said, furthermore, that if Bragg didn't like Schramm and could find one man in the whole regiment who was willing to transfer to D, now that Bragg was its captain, he would be glad to order an exchange; and this gave Bragg the opening he hoped for and a chance to reply that, so far from wanting to get Schramm out, his remarks were conclusive proof that he was only striving to keep him in. It was hot shot, give and take, for ten minutes, a warfare in which it must be owned that Tintop rejoiced even though he did not excel, and it ended in his ordering Bragg to leave the office and coming in, all in a towering rage, to ask Gray if he ever in all his life knew such a cantankerous ass as Bragg,—"unless it's me for letting him rub my fur the wrong way." Gray said that he really didn't like to draw invidious comparisons; but Schramm got the furlough, was back at Ransom in ten days, and caught the regiment before it camped in sight of Cloud Peak. He had a long conference with Bertha before he left, and his good-by to his captain and Connie was very brief. The day after he left there drove up to the door a low-wheeled phaeton that Connie instantly recognized as Mrs. Amory's. Mrs. Amory was the wife of one of the officers of the Eleventh, who, with her children, had gone back to visit their Kentucky home as soon as the regiment was ordered away, leaving the phaeton for sale. Bertha came in with a note addressed in Schramm's peculiar cramped and precise hand:

"Will not the gracious Miss Morgan do me the very great honor of the occasional exercising of the horse and carriage which must be left at the Empire stable during the summer without other use? The groom will call each morning for the orders of the gnädige Fräulein, whose acceptance will much honor and deeply oblige both 'Rand,' at her service, and the gracious lady's

"Most humble and grateful

"SCHRAMM."

And when the doctor happened in and found Connie with tear-brimming eyes and saw through the situation at a glance, he said it

was an inspiration. On those smooth hard roads, in that low, couch-like, soft-rolling carriage they could give her father air, sunshine, a sight of the distant mountains, a look at the old fort, an occasional visit to the now neglected grave. Constance took "Rand" on a preliminary spin, and found him, as was to be expected, perfectly bridle-wise and reliable, and between Dr. French and Bertha the dear old daddy was presently bundled in by her side, and the only mar to the exquisite joy and harmony of that sunshiny morning was the indignant howl of Billy-boy on their simultaneous return, he from school, the elders from their blissful drive.

And now frequently in the fair June weather they came bowling out to the garrison, Morgan contentedly reclining in the phaeton and chatting with old friends among the infantry officers, while Constance ran in to see Mrs. Woods and other lady friends who had been so kind to her in their dark days, and often they drove to the neglected cemetery, and the mother's grave, adorned now with simple head-stone, was put in order, turfed and trimmed, and often decked with wild flowers. But there was greater surprise in order. A letter from Aunt Lottie said their uncle had business requiring a visit to the far West, and that she would come with him. And they came, and spent two days in Butte, and Aunt Lottie urged her brother-in-law to make an effort and move to the East, for Connie's face was a fortune. "She will fall in love with and marry some penniless officer if she stays here," said the experienced woman of the world, and was aghast when Morgan calmly answered that he hoped she would, if the man was of the right sort, as only in the army had they found friends in the days of their sorest need. As for himself, he looked forward to the time when he could be laid away by Carrie's side. All he prayed for was that his children might not be left destitute. Already, indeed, two young gentlemen at the post, subalterns of Rhett's battalion, were noticed casting sheep's-eyes at Connie's lovely face, and were beginning to be assiduous callers at the little house in town, but Constance seemed to have no thought for any man but father. Aunt Lot went East again with distinct sense of defeat, but her husband took matters less to heart. The doctor had assured them that the long journey was hardly possible, and that Morgan would do fairly well until winter again set in, and then, "Should anything happen, Connie," he said, "you must come to us."

But Connie's reply was politely indefinite. Something did happen late that autumn, and Connie did not go.

XVII.

Letters came only at rare intervals and by roundabout and devious ways from the command in the Big Horn, but early in September there was news of interest. Sergeant-Major Hunter, covered with service chevrons and scars, took his honorable discharge and final papers and went into department head-quarters as clerk. Tintop and Gray had talked the probabilities over and were fully prepared. To

the wrath of Bragg, the grumbling of a few who disapproved of giving first prize to a two-year-old trooper, and yet who would equally have criticised any appointment Gray could have made, but to the outspoken satisfaction of nine-tenths of the regiment, Sergeant Schramm was named sergeant-major, the senior non-commissioned officer of the Eleventh. Modestly he accepted, for already his colonel and other officers had bidden him look even higher. "You are on the road to a commission," said Perry Thornton, when the young German came to tell him of the offered sergeant-majorship and to beg the Herr Lieutenant's kind advice. "I only wish the commission might come in time for you to stand up with me. Congratulate me, Rhetz: the wedding is to be in December."

One chilly October afternoon Connie had driven Mrs. Woods into town after a brief visit to the fort. Daddy was ailing again since the frost set in, and beginning to house himself still more. She had left her friend at Mrs. Whaling's, and, turning "Rand" about, was spinning up the main street towards their home at the westward skirt of town, when, striding along in front of her, slender, erect, in the most immaculate of yellow stripes and chevrons and a natty blue uniform, she caught sight of a well-known form, in an instant had reined up at the curb, and her glad voice, eager and joyous, rang with the old name.

"Schramm! Why, when—how did you get here?" she cried, throwing down the reins and holding forth her slender hand. The street was full of people, and who that saw could fail to note the sudden flash of delight in the face of the soldier addressed? Instantly he whirled about, sprang to the curb, and was on the point of clasping the proffered hand, when as suddenly he seemed to remember, straightened up instantly, raised the forage-cap from his curly blond head, and answered, respect, homage, admiration in his fine blue eyes,—

"Only this morning, gnädige Fräulein. The adjutant and I were sent in by way of Green River. The regiment is marching home."

"Oh, father will be so glad! Have you time—can you run up to see him now?"

"Assuredly, Miss Morgan. I was on my way there."

"That's simply lovely. Come, let me drive you now. You can't imagine what pleasure 'Rand' has given us all." And, edging back to the right side of the phaeton, she eagerly made room for him beside her. Schramm flushed to his very eyes.

"Oh, gnädige Fräulein, I thank you, but I could not. I will come——Pardon! I must stop on the way. Please drive on, Miss Morgan. It cannot be that I should drive with an officer's daughter." And, seeing rebellion in her eyes, he abruptly turned and strode away. He reached the little home only five minutes behind her, but the next day and the next "Rand" stood unused in the stable. "It's your own doing, Schramm," she said, with flashing eyes, when at last he meekly came to ask why she would no longer honor him by driving his horse and phaeton. "If there is any military impropriety in my driving you, there's every impropriety in my driving your horse and phaeton." And argument was useless. She refused to enter it again. This was

the first break. Then came a second. On three occasions within the ten days after his return, the sergeant-major, calling to see how fared his captain and the family, found Lieutenant Renshaw, a very presentable young infantryman, seated in the little parlor. Once it was Renshaw who opened the door. At sight of him the soldier had become rigid, like a pointer. His inquiries were made on this occasion with hand at salute, and he faced about and left at once, but Constance pursued and caught him at the gate, and Renshaw, watching from the window, saw him at attention, punctilious as ever, and saw that Constance was pleading. She was flushed and ready to cry when she came back. Schramm came seldom now, and Renshaw more frequently, and the third winter opened in chill and gloom.

Thornton came to say good-by just before Thanksgiving, and went blissfully away to his wedding, leaving Renshaw haunting the invalid's room and swearing to himself at Connie's ceaseless household duties. He began to realize that she was actually striving to avoid him, and so did Morgan. One night Morgan called her to him and gently, fondly began to plead with her. "He has asked my consent, Constance. He is a gentleman. He loves——" But she would hear no more, and with a burst of tears fled to her room. Poor Renshaw was told that Constance could not listen to any proposal: she would not leave daddy.

"But daddy must soon leave her," the father urged again, "and then what is to become of you and Lot and Billy? Renshaw said he would only be too glad——" But here the slender white hand was placed on his mouth, and further words were impossible.

He took it sorely to heart, did Renshaw, and he said some ill-advised and peppery things the day of Mrs. Fenton's tin-wedding reception when waltzing with Connie down the long hall. "If nothing but a German baron will suit, why, I suppose you can have him; but the least the fellow can do is to wait till he gets his commission, and not be——"

But he never finished. With one low cry of "Oh, shame, Mr. Renshaw!" she tore away from him and into the dressing-room.

It was just dark that evening when the ambulance from the post landed her at their door, and Mrs. Whaling, who had matronized the little party of town girls, drove on with her brood. Connie stole, as usual, to her father's side to bend and kiss him and murmur some fond inquiry. But pent-up indignation, the strain and misery of the long ride during which she had been compelled to listen to brainless sallies and congratulations on Renshaw's devotion, all proved too much for her. No sooner did she feel the father's arms around her than her girlish strength gave way, and she lay sobbing on his breast. There was the sound of a rasping chair, of some one striving to hurry from the room, but she did not hear. "He—he dared to speak of Schramm!" she cried, "of Schramm, who—who is truer gentleman—truer hero—than any—any—any officer they've got."

And the shadowy form striving to find means of exit from the tiny den in which reclined the invalid and his clasping, sobbing child was that of Sergeant-Major Schramm, who, all unnoticed and unseen by her, was thus become the hearer of his own perfections. Renshaw's

hapless outburst had proved his own undoing and swept away the last barrier to his rival's approach. "The least he can do is to wait till he gets his commission," indeed! After Connie's outburst it was more than mortal man could do to wait at all.

L'ENVOI.

It seems very long ago, that bitter winter in the heart of the Rockies, yet one of the old regiment, enjoying with his wife and children the first blissful taste of foreign travel, stood one exquisite summer morning on the forward deck of the oddly-modelled "dampfer" that was churning the blue-brown flood of the Rhine, and thus replied to the query of his better half:

"Know her? Why, you'll know her instantly. Connie can never grow old." Yes, rounded indeed is the sweet face of the woman standing with her soldierly husband close to the railing of the landing under the beautiful, vine-clad heights ahead, her soft brown eyes fixed in eagerness upon the approaching steamer. The slender form we knew in the shabby old black serge is almost majestic in its proportions now, yet how fair and sweet and smiling is the dear, bonny face once so piteously sad amid the snows of far-away Ransom! Happy wife and mother,—the idol of her soldier-husband's heart,—the "gnädige Fräulein" whom he won in distant America long years ago had speedily found her way into the love of the old retainers of the ancestral home to which, summoned to succeed the stern old father whose last words and thoughts were for his banished son, he bore her so soon after the last volley was fired over Morgan's head as they laid him away, as he had prayed, by Carrie's side. He died without a lingering fear for the children's future, one hand clasped in faithful Schramm's. The commission had indeed been tendered, but gracefully, courteously declined because of family duties at his old home in the fabled Rhineland. Again he wears the uniform of his famous corps, all the better officer for his experience in the American cavalry. Already Lottie had cut a wide swath among the bachelor subalterns of the hussars before finally bestowing heart and hand and a Schramm-provided *dot* upon a totally different party, though an eminently sound one. Already Billy has won distinction (as a skylarker and *schläger* and all-round scapegrace) at Heidelberg, where he sports a yellow cap and a monocle, a straggly moustache, and some ridiculous slashing scars, of all of which he is inordinately vain, and with genuine American enthusiasm he prattles of "my brother-in-law the baron," who laughs at his stories, chaffs him about his duels, quizzes him as to his scientific attainments (for Billy, be it known, is going back to America this fall to offer his services to capitalists as an expert mining engineer, and says for the first year a salary of five thousand dollars will do); but the Herr Graf pays his debts and provides his pocket-money, and the only secrets Connie does not share are those concerning her hopeful brother and his affairs. As for Connie herself, she is happy as the years are long, happy as even an army girl deserves to be.

THE END.

CAPTAIN CLOSE.

BY

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING,
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CAPTAIN CLOSE.

I.

THE conductor had eyed Lambert curiously as he punched his ticket. He held it a moment and edged his lantern around so that its feeble light could reinforce the glimmer from the bleared and smoky globe above Lambert's curly head. The train had started from the junction with that quick series of back-wrenching jerks which all veteran travellers remember as characteristic of American railways before the introduction of "coupler buffers." It was a shabby, old-fashioned train,—one whose cars had "seen service," and not a little of it, during the long and eventful war so recently closed. It had a baggage-car behind the wheezy old wood-burner that drew the rickety procession out into the dim, starlit aisle through the eastward forest, and, for the first time in a week, that baggage-car contained a trunk. It had a "smoker," in which three or four negroes were soundly sleeping on the worn cushions at the forward end, and three or four lank, shabbily-dressed whites were consuming tobacco and killing time under the single lamp at the other. It had a "ladies' car,"—so called,—in which no ladies were visible, and which differed in appointments from the smoker only in the facts that its seats were upholstered in dingy red plush instead of blackened canvas, and that both its lamps could be induced to burn, however feebly, instead of only one. It was a forlorn, hangdog, shamefaced sort of train, that seemed oppressed with sense of its own disrepute,—a train that kept in hiding during the broad light of day and ventured to slink forth only after nightfall, like some impoverished debtor, not loving the darkness better than light because of evil deeds, but hating it as it hated its own shabbiness, and accepting it as only one plane above total decrepitude, the junk-shop and the poor-house. Starting at dusk from a populous station on a north-and-south "trunk" line, it turned and twisted through red clay

cuttings, jolted over mud-covered ties and moss-grown trestles, whistling shrill to wake the watchers at 'cross-country stations on the way, and finally, after midnight, rested an hour at a prominent point, a "State centre," where, sometimes at one o'clock but generally long after, the night express came glaring up from the South along the glistening rails of another "great northern" route, and three nights in the week, perhaps, gave it a sleepy passenger or two to trundle away westward towards the big river town it managed to reach by sunrise, once more to slink out of sight until dark, when again it crept forth and stole away on the return trip over its clanking road, unresentful of comment on its loneliness and poverty, and proud, if anything, of the fact that this way, at least, it ran "right end foremost," according to the American idea, with the baggage- instead of the ladies' car next the struggling engine.

It was a clear, starlit night, sharply cold, and the planks of the platform at the junction had snapped and creaked under their glistening white coat of frosty rime. The up train came in even later than usual,—so much so that the station-master had more than once asked his friend the conductor of the waiting "Owl" whether he really thought he could "make it" over to Quitman in time for the down express at dawn. "You'd better pull out the minute she gits hyuh," was his final injunction when at last her whistle was heard.

A lithe, active young fellow in a trim suit of tweed had sprung from the sleeper before the incoming train had fairly stopped, and, hailing the first man he saw, asked, "Train for Tugaloo gone yet?" which so astonished the party addressed that he simply stared for a minute without reply. A voice crying in the wilderness, apparently, was heard above the hissing of steam and the loud mouthings of the negro porters of the two rival hotels. "All aboard for Quitman," it said, and, abandoning his apparent purpose of repeating the question in sharper tone, the young fellow turned and ran nimbly across the dimly-lighted platform in the direction of the hail.

"Quitman train?—Tugaloo?" he asked of a dark form standing above the tail light of the car.

"Quitman it is. Anybody else thar?" And the interrogative went off in a shout. No answer.

"Aw, *Hank!* Anybody else?" Still no answer. Two or three dim figures were by this time clustered around the flaring torch of a coffee-stand at the edge of the platform. The conductor got off and walked impatiently towards them.

"Any you gentlemen for Quitman?" he asked.

"Quitman? Hell, no! What's any man want to go thar for night like this? Pull out with your old sneezer, Jimmy, 'nless you'll stop and take a cup coffee."

"Oh, that you, cap? Ain't you got anybody for us? Thought the judge was comin' up to-night."

"Warn't on *my* car," said the brakeman of the express, possessively. "Young feller 'n the sleeper all *I* know of."

"Got *him*," answered the conductor as briefly as possible for a man long attuned to the soft Southern drawl, and whose "got" was more

like "gawt." "Reckon we might as well git, then," he continued, returning to the colloquial present indicative of a verb of manifold meaning and usefulness. "Tell Hank, will you?—Let 'er go, Jack," he shouted to the engineer with a wave of his lantern. A yelp from the whistle was the answer; the fireman crawled out from a warm corner in the baggage-car and shambled drowsily forward to the cab. Sudden jets of steam flew hissing out on the frosty air. One after another the three cars lunged sharply forward and then slowly rolled forth into the night. The conductor clambered up the rear steps with parting wave of his lantern, slammed the door after him, and came up the narrow aisle to look at his passenger. Before he had time to speak, however, his attention was attracted by a succession of yells from the track to their rear. Giving an angry yank at the bell-rope, he whirled about and hurried to the door. The train came willingly to a sudden stand, and Lambert, stowing his hand luggage on the empty seat before him, heard the following lively colloquy, as did everybody else who happened to be awake and within a radius of two hundred yards:

"What d'you want?"

"Come *back* hyuh, I say."

"What d'you wa-a-nt? I ain't goin' to back in thar now."

"Hyuh's a trunk."

"Wha-at?"

"A tru-u-unk."

"Why in hell didn't you sling it abawd *fihst* off?" sung out the conductor, disgustedly. "Ain't you felluhs got any brains?—Back up, Jack!" he shouted forward, signalling with his lantern again. "Somebody's left a band-bawx, by criminy!" And so, growling volubly, the custodian of the "Owl" swung himself out from the steps, hanging by the left hand to the iron railing and holding extended his green and white lantern with the other. A couple of stalwart negroes came panting forward to meet them, the offending trunk on their shoulders, and went stumbling up the sloping embankment towards the slowly backing baggage-car. The light from the lantern fell on the new canvas cover and on the fresh brown finish of the straps and handles, then on the inscription in bold black letters at the end:

I. N. LAMBERT,
U. S. ARMY.

At sight of which the conductor checked the half-jocular, half-resentful tirade he was composing for the benefit of the station-master, and abruptly asked,—

"Whuh's it goin'?"

"Tugaloo, suh," said the rearmost negro.

"Well, hump it abawd, 'n' be quick about it." Then, raising his voice, he shouted across the platform, "Shuah you ain't gawt a feedin'-bawtle or a cake o' soap or s'm' other truck to fetch me back again, Hank? Dawg gawn 'f I reckon we ever *will* get to Quitman, 't this rate!"

The darkies about the coffee-stand gave a guffaw of sympathetic

rejoicing over the official's humor. The conductor was evidently more popular than the station-master. One of the two trunk-bearers came lunging in at the front door of the car, and, humble yet confident, appealed to Lambert:

"Little somethin', suh, fur totin' de trunk? Bin los', mos' like, 'f it had n' bin f'r us. Thanky, suh. *Thanky.*" And the negro's eyes danced, for the *douceur* handed him by the young owner of the vagrant baggage exceeded his hopes. He strove, indeed, to turn and renew his thanks at the rear door, but was collared and hustled unceremoniously off the car.

"*You* ain't goin' to git off at Tugaloo this time o' night?" asked the conductor, finally, and with that odd emphasis expressive of doubt as to a passenger's knowledge of his own intentions so often heard in our thinly-settled districts. Lambert interpreted it to mean "Anybody else, perhaps, but not you." He was already cogitating as to whether or not the conductor had intended some covert sneer in his recent reference to "feeding-bottles," for Lambert was but one-and-twenty, and youthful-looking for his years. The tone of this inquiry and the look which accompanied it after deliberate pause and study of the proffered ticket, however, were far from aggressive or discourteous, yet the unintentional misplacing of the emphasis, following an allusion equally hapless and alike unintentional, had given umbrage to the boy. "You must expect to hear no end of unpleasant things," he had been told at department head-quarters, where he had received orders to go on and join his company, then in camp at Tugaloo. "Everybody is mighty sore yet over the late unpleasantness. Hold your tongue and keep your temper," were the parting injunctions; and he meant to do both. All the same he did not intend to allow people to treat him with discourtesy,—certainly not a conductor of a public railway. Lambert was on his dignity in a moment. He looked the railway man straight in the eye and replied, with all the calm and deliberation he could master, "My ticket would seem to indicate that such was my intention," and almost immediately regretted it, for the conductor looked up in sudden surprise, stood one instant irresolutely, then saying, "Oh! All right," turned abruptly away, walked up beyond the stove, and, roughly shaking the elbow of a snoring passenger, sung out, "Coatesville," and let himself out with an emphatic bang of the door.

Two days later, when asked at Quitman what sort of a fellow the new lieutenant seemed to be, Mr. Scroggs, the conductor, himself a soldier of large experience and no little ability,—a man who had fought his way from the ranks to the command of the remnant of a regiment that laid down its battered arms among the very last, a man not five years Lambert's senior in age, but lustrums ahead of him in the practical details of his profession,—Mr. Scroggs, the conductor, promptly said, "He's a dam little fool," and never dreamed how much he should one day deplore it.

"Newt" Lambert, as he was known among his intimates, was far from being a fool. He had seen very little of the world, it is true, and, until this December night, next to nothing of the sunny South, where at this particular period in our national history it was not every

man who could so conduct himself as not to fall into error. More especially in the military service was an old head needed on young shoulders, and a strong head between new shoulder-straps, for army life so soon after the great war was beset by snares and temptations it rarely hears of now, and many a fellow, brave and brainy both, in the days that tried men's souls 'twixt Big Bethel and Appomattox, or Belmont and Bentonville, went down in the unequal tussle with foe far more insidious than faced him in the field, but which met him day and night now that peace had come. It was at a time when the classes graduating from the Military Academy were being assigned mainly to the staff corps and to the artillery and cavalry regiments. Lambert fancied that he should prefer the associations and much prefer the stations of the artillery to those of any other corps, but an old friend of his father's, himself a veteran gunner, advised the young fellow to seek his fortune elsewhere. "If you are commissioned a lieutenant of artillery," said he, "it may be twenty years before you see your captaincy." And, though this was within three years after the reorganization of the army in '66, not one of Lambert's contemporaries who trusted to luck and applied for the artillery had yet come within hopeful range of the double bars. Lambert amazed them all when he asked for the infantry arm and took his commission thankfully.

He had been detailed for summer duty at the Point, as was then a custom, so that his leave of absence of three months did not begin until the 28th of August. He had been assigned to a regiment whose ranks were sadly depleted by the yellow fever, and which was still serving in the South. "You won't have to hoof it out to Idaho or Montana, anyhow," said a sympathetic friend, "and you'll have no end of fun at New Orleans."

But Lambert's company was not at New Orleans. Under recent orders it had been sent up into the heart of the country, where some turbulent spirits, so it was alleged, had been defying the civil officers of the general government, and by the time the short Southern winter set in more than half his regiment, together with three or four others, had been distributed by companies or detachments all over the Gulf States, and experienced officers were scarce as hens' teeth. The duty was unwelcome and galling. Lambert's captain lost no time in getting on staff duty, and "G" Company went into camp at Tugaloo under command of its first lieutenant. Arriving at New Orleans, Lambert reported himself at the head-quarters of the general commanding, who knew the boy's father, welcomed the son for old friendship's sake, and told his chief of staff to keep him there a week or so, that he might see something of the Southern metropolis and of his friends down at the barracks before going to his exile "up the road." Dining the very next evening at Captain Cram's, with Waring and Pierce of the light battery, and perhaps rather ruefully agreeing with them that he had "made a beastly fluke of it, going into the doughboys," Lambert was asked, "Who's in command of your company now?"

"Our first lieutenant," said he. "I don't know much about him, —Brevet Captain Close."

Whereupon Waring laid down his knife and fork. "Angels and

ministers of grace!" he exclaimed. "Well, if that isn't the oddest *contre-temps* I ever heard of!" And then they all began to laugh.

"You evidently know him," said Lambert, somewhat nettled and a trifle ill at ease. "Why did you ask me about him? Somebody told me he had been commissioned for heroism—special bravery in action, or something of that kind—during the war."

"Gospel truth," said Pierce. "Close is the most absolutely fearless man I ever met. Nothing even Waring could ever do or say would ruffle him." And then, though Mrs. Cram declared it a shame, she too joined in the general laughter. Close was evidently a celebrity.

And now, as Lambert found himself within a few miles—though it might be several hours—of his destination, he was thinking not a little of the officer to whose presence he was so soon to report his own, and whose companionship and influence, for good or for ill, he was bound to accept for the simple reason that, so far as he could learn, there was absolutely no one else with whom he could associate,—except, possibly, the "contract doctor."

Quitting New Orleans after a long day's sight-seeing with his friends, he had sought a berth in the Pullman and slept soundly until aroused by the porter after two o'clock to change cars at the junction. Now he was wide awake, and, after the first few miles of jolting and grinding through the darkness, was becoming chilled and lonesome,—perhaps a trifle home-sick. Twice had the conductor bustled through the train, rousing sleeping passengers and seeing them safely off at dark and mysterious stations where hardly a glimmer of lamp or candle could be seen away from the mere shanty which served as a waiting-room and office. A heap of wood was stacked up near the stove, and Lambert poked the waning embers and piled on fresh fuel, whereat a young man who had got on at Coatesville with a shot-gun and a big bottle for luggage, and who had for nearly an hour been singing sentimental snatches to his own deep satisfaction, now smiled maudlin approval and companionably held forth the bottle. "'S good," said he, in loyal defence of the stimulant most courteously declined. "Bes' thing you can take these co' mawnin's.—Live 'bout hyuh an'where?"

"No," said Lambert, civilly, yet hoping not to be further questioned. He busied himself again with the fire, then, rising quickly, sought his seat.

But the young man with the flask was gregarious and bubbling over with the milk of human kindness. He promptly lurched after, and, flopping down into the opposite seat, sending some of Lambert's belongings clattering to the floor, held out his hand.

"'Scuse me, suh," he stuttered. "I hope I ain't—'fended you. My name's Potts,—Barton Potts. We ain't what we were befo' the wah, you know. But I know a gen'l'm'n—every time. Hope—I ain'—'sulted——"

"Not by any means!" protested Lambert, loudly and heartily. "Don't think of such a thing! I simply didn't feel like drinking; but I'm a thousand times obliged to you."

"Tha'z right. Tha'z all right," said Mr. Potts, grasping Lambert's hand and shaking it impressively. "I—hello! Wha'z that?"

Lambert's sword, encased in chamois-skin, had come in contact with the stranger's elbow and gone rattling under the seat. Potts made a precipitate dive and fished it out, regaining his equilibrium after some little struggle.

"Goin' to Quitman—too? Tha'z my home. An' I'm glad—meet you. I *know* a gen'l'm'n,—an' I'll stan' your frien'——I mean it. Missur—Missur——"

"My name's Lambert," said the lieutenant, quietly essaying to relieve Mr. Potts of the sword.

"Lammert? Glad—meet you—Missur Lammert. Where'd you say you b'longed?"

"I'm going to Tugaloo."

"Tu-gloo?—Tha'z no kin' of place. C'mawn to Quimman. Come to my house.—What 'n 'ell's thiz?" he broke off suddenly.

"My sword," said Lambert, simply.

"Sword?—*sword?*" exclaimed Potts. "You goin' Tu-gloo with sword? You—Yankee off'cer like that—wha'z name?—Close?"

"A Yankee officer certainly," laughed Lambert. "I've never met Captain Close."

The effect of this announcement on Mr. Potts was surprising. It well-nigh sobered him. He slowly drew back until he sat erect, his head wobbling a bit in spite of his efforts at self-control. Presently he began to speak, slowly and impressively at first, then winding up in a verbal entanglement:

"Missur Lam-p-bert, I didn't know I was talkin' to—Yankee officer—but—I'm a gen'l'm'n, suh, an' I stan' by wh-wha—I say. I mean to stan' *your* frien', suh; but as fo' that oth—felluh—*Close*—I'll see'm in 'ell first."

II.

It was sun-up and snapping cold when the brakeman shouted "Tugaloo," and gratefully Lambert stepped from the train and felt free air. Mr. Potts was sleeping soundly, doubled up in one of the seats. The only wakeful bipeds in sight were the conductor and his trainman. Unseen hands forward had shoved the trunk out upon the frosty boards. The sun was just peeping over a low wooded ridge before them. The track wound away among some desolate fields where tiny flakes of cotton still clung to the brown and withered stalks. In a cloud of steam the train pulled away, leaving Lambert and his trunk to look after each other as best they might, and as the cloud lifted the young officer looked curiously around him.

He was standing on a rude wooden platform whose shrunken planks left black, gaping seams between their upper faces, now, at least, beautiful in their thick coat of sparkling white. Except where the footmarks of the trainmen marred the smooth expanse, and where in two or three places the planks were gone entirely, this gleaming sheet stretched the length of the platform to where the white bulk of his trunk stood on end at the eastern edge. The charred and blackened relic of a flight of stairs led from the platform to the sloping ground

some five feet below, but not even a hand-rail warned the unwary against a breakneck plunge into space. Part of the platform itself had been burned away, and some charred and blackened posts, sticking bolt upright from the ground in the shape of a narrow rectangle, showed that a wooden building of some kind had formerly stood along the rear of the rickety staging. Midway along its length, on the southern side, a shed with sloping roof had been loosely thrown together, and the end nearest him, boarded in and pierced for a door and a couple of windows, bore over the threshold in black stencil the legend "Ticket Office." Under the shed were a couple of ploughs and some boxes. Out on the bare slope, midway between the track and a "snake" fence that paralleled it some twenty yards to the south, a dozen bales of cotton were huddled, three of them partially covered by old war-worn 'paulins and ponchos, the others entirely exposed to the rain of sparks to be expected from any passing engine when the wind happened to blow from across the track; and all of them, evidently, defenceless against the predatory hands of pilferers, for jagged rents were torn in the coarse sacking of each, and huge fistfuls of the white staple had been dragged from a dozen gaping wounds in every bale.

The red soil, showing here and there through the scant and withered herbage, was seamed with mule- and wheel-tracks, and a few rods away a broken-down farm-wagon lay with a spoke-bristling hub close by its shattered axle, while the tire, rolling away from the general wreck, seemed to have crawled off to die by itself, and leaned rusting against one of the charred timbers. The southward view was limited to a long, low ridge of ugly, white-flecked cotton-stalks. Eastward the sun was breaking a pathway through the fringe of trees along another ridge, and a faint line of mist, rising sluggishly in the intervening low ground, with the hollow rumble of the train crossing an invisible bridge, told of the presence of some slow-moving stream. Westward the track came into view around a thinly wooded hill-side, with a clearing here and there, in which some low cabins were scattered.

With this cheerful outlook to greet him at three points of the compass, Lambert turned him to the north. There was a siding with a switch at each end, but, as three or four rails were missing opposite the west end of the platform, it stood to reason that the railway company found the other all that was necessary to the traffic of so bustling a place as Tugaloo. A brown freight-car stood on the siding with wide-opened doors, and some household goods loomed in plain sight. "There is more honesty in this community than the United States marshal would give us to believe," thought Lambert, as he recalled the extract from a recent report which was shown him at department head-quarters. He laid his satchel and sword upon the platform, and, wrapping his blue circular about his shoulders, took a few steps forward and a peep into the interior of the car. From the midst of bedsteads, bureaus, and cheap, old-fashioned furniture, a quantity of bedding had been hauled out upon the floor, and from the midst of the bedding a woolly head protruded,—that of a negro fast asleep.

Beyond the car stood a dusty open square, bordered on three sides

by dingy wooden structures, some of two stories, but most of them only one in height. A wooden side-walk framed the square in some places, and in others only indications of its former presence were to be seen. The side-walk was bordered by a rude railing, to which, it was evident, horses and mules were tethered during business hours, for at one of the rails, even now, sprawled upon the soft, hoof-pawed dust, a long-eared quadruped was half hanging by the bridle-rein, while the dilapidated saddle had worked around during the night until it settled upon the animal's side.

Judging from such signs or legends as were visible over the doorways of Tugaloo, Lambert's impressions were that the vending of intoxicating drinks was the principal industry, as there were three saloons to one store devoted to general merchandise,—which establishment, painted white and with an air of prosperity and a flock of cotton-bales around it, bore the sign of I. Cohen, and told pathetically that the pioneers of a relentless and one-sided trade had already made their lodgement in the midst of a helpless community.

It was sunrise, and not a soul was apparently astir. A street led away northward at right angles to the main front of the square, and straggling houses lined it at intervals on either side. One of these, with a belfry, at the corner of the plaza, seemed to be a meeting-house of some kind, possibly the *pro tempore* substitute for the county court-house, thought Lambert, for the centre of the square was still heaped with charred and blackened beams and bricks where once the court-house stood.

As for the camp or quarters of his future comrades and associates, Lambert could see nothing that in the least resembled a military station, and, do what he could, the boy found it impossible to down the faintly heartsick, homesick feeling that speedily took possession of him. A dog would have been welcome as companion, but there was not even a stray dog. For a moment Lambert thought of arousing the negro, but after one glance at the wide, red cavern of his mouth and the emptied flask lying close to the frowzy head, he decided in favor of the mule.

A short walk brought him to the side of the prostrate creature, and a long pull induced his muleship to stagger to his feet, but in his struggles he snapped the old headstall, and the remnant of the bit and bridle dropped into the dust. It was not until the vagrant stood erect that Lambert discovered from the U. S. brand that he was, or had been, government property. The saddle, too, turned out to be one of the old-fashioned, black-skirted, pig-skin McClellans, so familiar during the war days. As the mule seemed only half awake and unaware as yet of his freedom, Lambert first essayed to reset the saddle, to which he submitted without objection, and then to replace the bridle, to which he would not submit at all, but with lowered front and menacing hoof turned him about and jogged over to where some wisps of hay lay scattered in front of a shanty labelled "Post-Office." For ten minutes Lambert exercised his arts in vain effort to recapture that mule, and then, in sheer disgust, threw the bridle on the side-walk, picked up an abandoned half-brick, and let the mule have it in the flank. He merely twitched his scraggy hide, raised one instant the nearmost hoof,

but never lifted his head. The brute was hungry from long fasting, and did not mean to be disturbed, and Lambert, who had eaten nothing since the previous day, was presently in full sympathy. Once more he looked around in search of some human being, and found himself confronting a citizen in shirt-sleeves and a tangled head of hair, who, leaning out of a second-story window, was nevertheless not twenty feet away. For a moment each regarded the other without a word. Then the native spoke:

"What ye tryin' to do?"

"I was trying to catch that mule."

"Want him f'r anything?"

"No: only I found him tangled in his reins, and he got away after I loosed him."

The native regarded the new-comer curiously. Lambert had slung his blue cape over the hitching-rail during his brief pursuit of the ungrateful beast, and his neat-fitting suit of tweed was something new to Tugaloo eyes. So was the jaunty drab Derby.

"You don't b'long roun' yere, do you?" queried Tugaloo next.

"I don't; and the Lord knows I don't want to; and I'd be glad to find some way of getting myself and my trunk, yonder, out to camp. Can you suggest any?"

"We-ell, *you* might walk. Don't reckon your trunk kin, though. Know the way?"

"No."

"Foller the track down thar a piece, an' you'll come to a path along the branch. It'll take you right in 'mongst the tents. 'Tain't more 'n a few rawds."

"Thank you, my friend. You're the first live man I've found. I suppose I can send in for my trunk."

"Reckon ye can. *They*'ve gawt mules an' wagons enough."

Lambert gathered up his belongings and trudged away. He did not mean to yield to the feeling of depression that was struggling to possess him, yet the blue devils were tugging at his heart-strings. Wasn't this just what his classmates had prophesied would happen if he went into the infantry? *Could* any service be much more joyless, uneventful, forlorn, than this promised to be? "Mark Tapley himself would go to pieces in such a place," he had heard some one at head-quarters say of Tugaloo, but he meant to out-Tapley Mark if need be, and nobody should know how much he wished he hadn't been assigned to this sort of duty and this particular regiment,—certainly not his classmates, and, above all, not the loving mother at home. Heavens! how unlike was this bleared, wasted, desolate land to the sweet and smiling New England vale where his boyhood had been spent, to the thickly-settled, thrifty, bustling shores of the Merrimac!

He had walked nearly a mile and had seen no sign of camp or sentry, but on a sudden the path left the brushwood beside the sluggish "branch," rounded a projecting knoll, and was lost in a rough, red clay, country road. A fence, with a thick hedge of wild-rose-bushes, was to his left,—leaves and roses long since withered,—and over the tops he caught sight of the roof and upper story of some old Southern

homestead, at which he had a better peep from the gate-way farther along. A path of red brick led to the flight of steps, broad and bordered by pretentious balustrades. Dingy white columns supported the roof of a wide piazza. Smoke was drifting from a battered pipe projecting from the red brick chimney at the north end, and the morning air was faintly scented with a most appetizing fragrance of broiling ham. It made Lambert ravenous.

Somewhere around the next bend in the road, beyond the northward extremity of the old fence, he could hear the sound of voices and a splashing of water. Hastening on, he found himself overlooking a level "bench" surrounded on three sides by a deep bend of the stream and partially separated from the red roadway by a fringe of stunted trees and thick, stubborn bushes; and here, in an irregular square, Lambert came face to face with the encampment of the first company, outside of West Point, it was ever his luck to join. At that particular moment he was just about ready to resolve it should be the last.

On two sides of the square, facing each other and perhaps twenty yards apart, were the "A" tents of the company, ten on a side. At the flank farthest from the road and pitched so as to face the centre of the enclosure was a wall tent, backed by one or two of the smaller pattern. Nearest the road was a second wall tent, used, possibly, by the guard,—though no guards were visible,—the white canvas cover of an army wagon, and a few more scattered "A" tents. Cook-fires had been ablaze and were now smouldering about the wagon. Several men in gray woollen shirts were washing their faces at the stream; others, in light-blue overcoats, were sauntering about the tents, some of whose occupants, as could be easily seen, were still asleep.

Standing at the edge of the winding road, and thinking how easy a matter it would be to toss a hand-grenade into the midst of the camp, Lambert paused a moment and studied the scene. Resting on his sword, still in its chamois case, with his cloak and satchel thrown over his shoulder, the young officer became suddenly aware of a man wearing the chevrons of a corporal who, fishing-rod in hand, was standing just beyond a clump of bushes below and looking up at him with an expression on his shrewd, "Bowery-boy" face in which impudence and interest were about equally mingled. So soon as he found that he was observed, the corporal cocked his head on one side, and, with arms akimbo and a quizzical grin on his freckled phiz, patronizingly inquired,—

"Well, young feller, who made *them* clothes?"

Lambert considered a moment before making reply. One of his favorite instructors at the Academy had spoken to the graduating class about the splendid timber to be found among the rank and file of the army. "They are like so many old oaks," said he, and some of Lambert's chums had never forgotten it. Neither had Lambert. "This," said he to himself, "is possibly one of the scrub oaks. I assume he doesn't imagine me to be an officer, and, in any event, he could say so and I couldn't prove the contrary. Ergo, I'll let him into the secret without letting him imagine I'm nettled."

"They were made by my tailor, corporal," said he. "He also made

the uniform which I, perhaps, should have put on before coming out to camp." ("That ought to fetch him," thought he.) "Where will I find Captain Close?"

"*He's* over there," said the corporal, with a careless jerk of the head in the direction of the opposite wall tent. "Then I s'pose you're the new lieutenant the fellers have been talking about?"

"I am; and would you mind telling me how long you've been in service?"

"Me? Oh, I reckon about two months,—longer 'n you have, anyhow. You ain't joined yet, have you?" And the corporal was nibbling at a twig now and looking up in good-humored interest. Then, as Lambert found no words for immediate reply, he went on, "Cap's awake, if you want to see him." And, amazed at this reception, yet not knowing whether to be indignant or amused, Lambert sprang down the pathway, crossed the open space between the tents, a dozen of the men starting up to stare at but none to salute him, and halted before the tent of his company commander.

Sitting just within the half-opened flap, a thick-set, burly man of middle age was holding in his left hand a coarse needle, while with the right he was making unsuccessful jabs with some black thread at the eye thereof. So intent was he upon this task that he never heard Lambert's light footfall nor noted his coming, and the lieutenant, while pausing a moment irresolute, took quick observation of the stranger and his surroundings. He was clad in the gray shirt and light-blue trousers such as were worn by the rank and file. An ordinary soldier's blouse was thrown over the back of the camp-stool on which he sat, and his feet were encased in the coarse woollen socks and heavy brogans with leathern thongs, just exactly such as the soldier cook was wearing at the hissing fire a few paces away. His suspenders were hung about his waist, and in his lap, seat uppermost and showing a rent three inches in length, were a pair of uniform trousers with a narrow welt of dark blue along the outer seam. They were thin and shiny, like bombazine, in places, and the patch which seemed destined to cover the rent was five shades too dark for the purpose. His hands were brown and knotted and hard. He wore a silver ring on the third finger of the left. His face was brown as his hands, and clean shaved (barring the stubble of two days' growth) everywhere, except the heavy "goatee," which, beginning at the corners of his broad, firm mouth, covered thickly his throat and chin. His eyes were large, clear, dark brown in hue, and heavily shaded. His hair, close-cropped and sprinkled with gray, was almost black.

The morning air was keen, yet no fire blazed in the little camp-stove behind him, and the fittings of the tent, so far as the visitor could see, were of the plainest description. Not caring to stand there longer, Lambert cleared his throat and began:

"I am looking for Captain Close."

Whereupon the man engaged in threading his needle slowly opened the left eye he had screwed tight shut, and, as slowly raising his head, calmly looked his visitor over and at last slowly replied,—

"That's my name."

III.

Newton Lambert has more than once in the course of his years of service been heard to say that of all the odd sensations he ever experienced that which possessed him on the occasion of his reporting for duty with his first company was the oddest. Accustomed during his four years of cadet life to behave with punctilious respect in the presence of officers, young or old, and accustomed also through his two months' detail at the Academy that summer to be treated with even the exaggerated deference which the old non-commissioned officers seemed to delight in showing to young graduates, Lambert was unprepared for the hail-fellow-well-met nature of his reception by the enlisted men and the absolute impassiveness of his one brother officer. That it was utterly different from the customs obtaining elsewhere in the regular service he knew very well. In visiting classmates already on duty with their batteries among the New York and New England forts, as well as during his brief stay at the barracks, he had noted the scrupulous deference of the veteran sergeants when addressing their officers. He could understand awkwardness and clumsiness among the recruits, but the idea of a corporal chaffing him on the cut of his clothes and—the idea of a two months' recruit being a corporal, anyhow! Never in the tales told of the Fire Zouaves of '61 had he heard of anything much more free-and-easy than the manners of this camp of regulars. Never in his wildest dream had he figured such a specimen of the commissioned officer as he had found in Captain Close. In the contemplation of this character the go-as-you-please style of the enlisted man sank into insignificance. Long years afterwards Lambert used to go over this meeting in his mind, and for two years, often importuned, he would convulse his brother officers by vivid description of it. But there came a time when they no longer laughed and he no longer told the story save to those he loved and trusted utterly.

Aroused by some unusual chatter among the men, the first sergeant of Company "G," smoking a pipe while working over a ration-return, stuck his head out of his tent and saw a young gentleman in a light-colored suit, courteously raising a drab Derby in his kid-gloved hand, while he stood erect with soldierly ease before the company commander. Sergeant Burns also noted that some of the men were tittering and all of them looking on. One glance was enough. The sergeant dropped pen and pipe and came out of his den with a single bound, buttoning his blouse and glaring about him as he did so. "Hush your d—d gab, you!" he fiercely growled at the nearest group. "Get into your coats, there!" he swore at another, while with menacing hand he motioned to others still, whose costume was even more primitive, to scramble back to their tents. In ten seconds silence reigned throughout the camp almost as complete as that which was maintained, for that time, at the tent of the commanding officer. Lambert actually did not know what to say in response to his superior's announcement. It was full ten seconds, or more, before he determined in what form to couch his next remark. He had intended to say, "I have the honor to report for duty, sir;" but a vague suspicion possessed him that this

might be some game at his expense,—some prank such as old cadets played upon "plebes." He compromised, therefore, between his preconception of a strictly soldierly report and his sense of what might be due his own dignity. "My name is Lambert," said he. "And I am here for duty as second lieutenant."

Slowly the man in the camp-chair laid down his work, sticking the needle into the flap of the tent and hanging the thread upon it. Then he heaved up out of the chair, hung the damaged trousers over its back, and came ponderously forward. Not a vestige of a smile lightened his face. He looked the young gentleman earnestly in the eye and slowly extended his big, brown, hairy hand. Seeing that it was meant for him, Lambert shifted his hat into the left, leaning his sword against the tent-pole, and his dainty kid—a wild extravagance so soon after the war—was for an instant clasped, then slowly released. Captain Close unquestionably had a powerful "grip."

"How'd you come?" he asked. "Kind of expected you Monday evenin'—out from Quitman."

"The general kept me over a day or two to let me see New Orleans. He told me that you would be notified, sir. I hope you got the letter?"

"Oh, yes. That was all right. There was no hurry. I didn't know as they could get passes over the Northern. I s'pose the chief quartermaster fixed it for you, though?" And the brown eyes searched questioningly the young officer's face.

"Passes? No, sir; I bought my ticket through——"

"No! Why, you needn't have done that. The Quitman road's biddin' for all the government freight it can get now. They'd have given you a pass in a minute. I s'pose you want to be quartermaster and commissary?" And again the brown eyes looked almost wistfully into the blue.

"I? No indeed, sir: I don't know anything but a little tactics. What I most want"—with a glance around and an apologetic laugh—"is a chance to wash off the cinders—and something to eat. I'm hungry as a wolf."

The captain looked troubled. "I've had my grub; so've the men, 'cept those that come back late in the night—been up to Buckatubbee with the marshal. Did you try over at Toog'loo?"

"Everybody was asleep over there. I left my trunk at the railway and walked out."

"Why, I told the sergeant to send a mule in last night on the chance of your comin' by the 'Owl.' Didn't anybody meet you?"

"There was a mule, but no body," laughed Lambert, "except a darky asleep in a freight-car. The mule was lying in the dirt, and snapped his headstall when I tried to raise him."

"What became of him? He didn't get away, did he?" asked Close, in great anxiety.

"He didn't try to," answered Lambert, in some amusement. "Like the eminent head of the late unpleasantness, all he asked was to be let alone. I left him browsing in the public square."

"And the bridle an' saddle, too? Great Peter! That's bad. Some

lousy nigger 's got him by this time, or his trappin's at least, an' he'll swear the Freedman's Bureau gave him the hull outfit, and it'll be stopped against my pay. *Sergeant!*" he called: "wish you'd go right down town an' catch up that mule an'——"

"*I* can't go, sir," promptly answered Sergeant Burns, his hand going up in unaccustomed salute in deference to the presence of the new officer. "I'm busy with them ration-returns. Here, Finney, you go."

"Go where?" said a young soldier squatting at his tent door and greasing a pair of shoes with a bit of bacon-rind. He hardly deigned to look up.

"The captain wants you to go and get that saddle-mule he sent up last night. Jake must have gone asleep and forgot him."

"Would it be possible to send a wagon for my trunk?" interposed Lambert at this juncture, appealing to his superior. Close hesitated and made no immediate reply. It was the sergeant who took the responsibility:

"*I'll* 'tend to it, if you please, sir. The wagon's going up in ten minutes to haul some grain.—Be lively now, Finney. Drop them shoes and start." And Finney, conscious, possibly, of some change in the military atmosphere, gathered himself together and vanished.

Meantime, in his anxiety about the government property thus placed in jeopardy, the captain seemed lost to all thought of the newcomer's comfort. It was Sergeant Burns who came forward with a camp-stool and proffer of further hospitality.

"If the lieutenant can put up with such rations, I'll send something from the cook-fire, sir," said he, doubtfully, looking at his commander very much as though he thought it high time for that official to suggest something better. Lambert said he should be most grateful if that could be done—and if there were no objections; and he, too, looked expectantly at the senior officer.

"I guess that's about the best we can do," said Close, slowly. "'Tain't what you've been accustomed to, but it's what *I* always eat. Send us up somethin', sergeant,—enough for two: I'll take another snack with the lieutenant."

And in less than five minutes Lambert and his new comrade were seated by a little fire on which a tin coffee-pot was hissing, and, with a broad pine shelf upon their knees, from big tin mugs and broad tin plates, were discussing a smoking repast of pork and beans, to the accompaniment of bread and syrup and creamless coffee. "It's the way I always prefer to live when I'm in the field," said Close, "and it only costs you nine dollars a month."

Lambert was too hungry not to relish even such a breakfast. He fancied he heard something that sounded greatly like a suppressed chuckle on the part of the soldier cook at his senior's remark upon the cost of living in the field, but sensations and experiences were crowding thickly upon him and there was little time for trifles.

Through the good offices of Sergeant Burns, a wall tent was pitched that morning for "the new lieutenant" to the left of the domicile of the company commander; a wooden bunk was knocked up in an "A"

tent in the back, and Lambert began unpacking his trunk and setting up housekeeping.

"I suppose I can get what furniture I want in town," said he to Close.

"Depends on what you want," replied the senior, warily, "and whether you care to throw away your money. What'd you want to get? They will skin the last cent out of you there at Cohen's."

"I merely want some cheap truck for camp, and some wash-stand fixings," Lambert answered, falling into the vernacular of his comrade with the ease of one just out of the national school, where every known American dialect can be heard,—"things I can throw away when we leave."

Close was silent a moment. "*I* can let you have everything you need, 'f you ain't particular 'bout their bein' new. They're just as good as anything you can buy, and won't cost you near so much." Then, after a little hesitation, "They ain't mine to give, or I'd let you have them for nothing."

Lambert had precious little money left, even after drawing his November pay in New Orleans; but he had a big mileage account to collect, for in those days nothing was paid to the young graduate in advance, even though he had to find his way by the Isthmus to the mouth of the Columbia. He thanked his comrade, and by evening was put in possession of an odd lot of camp-furniture, some items of which were in good repair and others valuable only as relics of the war. A camp-mattress and some chairs bore the name of Tighe, and the soldier who carried them in remarked to his chum, "They didn't burn everything after the lieutenant died, after all, did they?" From which Lambert drew the inference that the property in question had formerly belonged to an officer of that name who succumbed to the epidemic of the previous year.

But the principal question remaining unsolved was that of subsistence. Waring and Pierce had told him that in all probability he would find that Close was living on soldier fare and had no "mess arrangements" whatever. This, as we have seen, proved to be the case,—and Lambert inquired if there were no possibility of finding board. "Yes," said Close; "Mr. Parmelee, the deputy marshal, lives up the road about half a mile, and he told me to say he'd be glad to accommodate you." Lambert lunched in camp at noon, and about three o'clock came forth from his tent buttoned to the throat in his handsomely fitting uniform, his forage-cap cocked jauntily over his right eye, and a pair of white gloves in his hand. A soldier slouching across the open space in front shifted to the opposite hand the bucket he was carrying, and saluted. Close surveyed his trim subaltern without changing a muscle of his face.

"What do they charge you extra for them buttons?" he finally inquired. Lambert said he didn't know. They were on the coat when it came from the tailor's. Would the captain kindly direct him to Mr. Parmelee's and permit him to go thither? The captain gravely said he need not ask permission just to leave camp,—even the men didn't do that,—and gave him the needed instructions, winding up by

saying, "Got your pistol?" Lambert answered that he never carried one.

"You'll *have* to, here," said Close, "or be out of fashion entirely. I ain't got one to lend, but if you've a mind to pay less than cost I've got one that'll just suit you, strap and holster complete." In five minutes the trade was made, and Lambert had only eleven dollars left when he started to hunt up Mr. Parmelee.

Close watched the erect figure of the young fellow as he stepped briskly away. So did the first sergeant. Midway across the open space between the tents half a dozen of the men were squatting, in the bright sunshine, pipes in full blast, engaged in a game of cards that looked suspiciously like draw poker, a gray blanket being outspread and little piles of white field beans decorating its outer edge at different points. Surrounding the players were perhaps a dozen spectators, in various costumes more or less soldierly. At sight of Mr. Lambert in his trim frock-coat, some of the number faced half towards him; some, as though embarrassed, began to edge away. The gamblers calmly continued their game. If the young officer had looked as though he did not notice them, the chances are that, though he passed within ten feet of the group, no one of the party would, in proper and soldierly style, have noticed *him*, but Lambert had seen enough "slouching" for one day, and his youthful soul was up in arms. He looked squarely at the two men nearest him as he rapidly approached, whereupon one of them nervously tugged at the sleeve of a third. Others, after one furtive glance, pretended they did not see the coming officer and became absorbed in the game. Ten strides, and he was opposite the group and not a hand had been raised in salute, not a man was "standing attention." Then he halted short, saying not a word, but the two men nearest knew what was lacking, and, in a shamefaced, shambling way, brought their hands up to the cap visor. One of these was a corporal, and two other non-commissioned officers were among the players. For a moment there was an embarrassed silence. Then Lambert spoke,—rather quietly, too, for him:

"Corporal, have these men never been taught the salute, and when to use it?"

A sergeant among the players slowly found his feet. Others seemed to try to slink behind their fellows. The corporal turned red, looked foolish, and only mumbled inarticulately.

"What say *you*, sergeant?" inquired Lambert.

"Why, yes, sir," said Sergeant McBride, uncomfortably. "So far as I'm concerned, I can honestly say I did not see the lieutenant coming; but, to tell the truth, sir, we've got out of the habit of it in the company."

"Then all these men who are still seated here know they should be up and standing attention?" asked Lambert, as coolly as he could, though his blue eyes were beginning to flash. He had heard some tittering among the gamesters, two more of whom were now getting up.

"Yes, sir; at least most of them do. Only, Captain Close don't seem to mind, and——"

"That'll do.—I am waiting for you two," said Lambert. And the

two who, hanging their heads, had been tittering into each other's faces, finding their time had come, slowly and awkwardly found their feet, but not the erect position of the soldier.

"So far so good," said Lambert, calmly.—"Now, sergeant, explain the rest to them, as they seem to be uninstructed recruits."

There was a general titter at this: one of the two was an ex-sergeant of ten years' service,—one of John Barleycorn's defeated wrestlers. His eyes snapped with wrath, but he knew the lieutenant "had the best of him."

"Don't make it necessary for me to repeat the lesson," said Lambert before moving on; "especially you, sir." And the ex-sergeant was plainly the man indicated.

Up at the end of the row Sergeant Burns brought his broad palm down on his thigh with a whack of delight, then glanced over to see how the captain took it.

The captain was carefully counting over the "greenbacks" he had just received, and, with these in hand, turned into the dark recesses of his farther tent. The episode in front was of minor importance.

"*You* got a rakin' down, Riggs," laughed some of the men as the lieutenant was lost to sight beyond the wagon, while the victim of his brief reprimand glowered angrily after him.

"Dam young squirt!" snarled the fellow. "I'll learn *him* a lesson yet."

"No, you won't, Riggs," was the quick rejoinder of McBride. "He was perfectly right, as you ought to have sense enough to know. I'm glad, for one, to see it, for this company has simply been goin' to the dogs for the last six months."

IV.

Lambert's nerves were tingling a trifle and his thoughts were not the most cheerful as he went away. That he should find his company commander a miser, a recluse, and something of a mystery, had all been foreshadowed. But that discipline should have been abandoned in "G" Company was quite another thing. Farnham, the captain proper, was an officer who had held high command in the volunteers,—too high, indeed, to serve with equanimity under the field-officer now at the head of the regiment, who had had no war service whatever. Farnham was within a few files of promotion to majority, and therefore despised company duty. So long as his company had been stationed in the city, furnishing guards and orderlies for the various officials then quartered there, he remained with it, and occasionally saw a portion of it on Sunday morning. Then, after two years of this demoralizing service, came the months of detachment duty up in the interior, and Farnham's friends at court were glad to get him out of such a mire as that. Ever since June, therefore, Close had been alone with the men and they with him, and no one in authority had the faintest idea how things were going. Inspectors were almost unknown in those days, and so long as reports and returns were regularly received

at head-quarters, and no complaints came in from the civil authorities of negligence or indifference on part of their military backers, all went smoothly. Now, there had been not a few instances where civil and military officials had clashed, but "Captain Close and his splendid company" had been the theme of more than one laudatory report from the marshal on the score of what he heard from his deputies. The general commanding, indeed, had been much elated by high commendation from the highest power in Washington, all due to services rendered in running down Ku Klux and breaking up moonshiners by Captain Close of Company "G," —th Infantry. "It's just exactly what the old duffer's cut out for," said the adjutant-general of the department; "but I'm sorry to have to see young Lambert sent into such exile."

He could hardly have been sorrier than Lambert was himself as that young officer went briskly up the desolate road along the "branch." He had never seen a landscape so dismal in all his life. How on earth was he to employ his time? No drills, no roll-calls, no duties except the sending forth of detachments at the call of this fellow Parmelee; no books except the few in his trunk; no companions except this heavy, illiterate, money-grubbing lout who did not know enough to offer him a seat or a cup of coffee after his long night ride; not a soul worth knowing nearer than Quitman—and only the inebriate Potts there! Certainly, Mr. Newton Lambert felt at odds with fate this sunny December afternoon. He had tried to persuade himself that the laughable stories about Close were grossly exaggerated; but, now that he had met that officer, the indications were in favor of their entire truth.

It seems that Close had been on some detached service in connection with the Freedmen's Bureau, and had only joined his regiment late in the autumn of the memorable yellow-fever year, when, had he so desired, he could have remained away. His appearance at the stricken garrison when the death-rate averaged twenty a day, when the post was commanded by a lieutenant and some of the companies by corporals,—everybody else being either dead, down, or convalescent,—added to the halo which hung about his hitherto invisible head. There was no question as to his consummate bravery. Grant himself had stopped in rear of his regiment and asked his name after its dash on the works at Donelson, and the unknown private was decorated with sergeant's chevrons on the spot. Before he had opportunity to learn much of his new duties, "the Johnnies jumped the picket" one night and stampeded everybody but Close, who was given up for lost until he came in two days later full of buckshot and information. His colonel acted on the latter while the doctors were digging out the former, and Close got a commission as first lieutenant in a new regiment for his share of the resultant benefits. One bloody afternoon as they were scrambling back, unsuccessful, and under an awful fire, from the works at Vicksburg, the colonel was left writhing on the lead-swept glacis with no shelter but the dead and dying around him, and Close headed the squad that rushed out and fetched him in. Everybody at McPherson's side could see that the Rebs were firing high, when once the daring survivors of the six who started reached their prostrate colonel, but the bullets sounded just as deadly to the four who got back alive,

and McPherson sent for Close and wrung his hard brown hand and looked admiringly into the sombre, impassive face with its deep-brown, almost dog-like, eyes. Some of the Thirteenth regulars were the next to report on Close, and these fellows, being at Sherman's head-quarters, had influence. In the midst of so rough a campaign Close looked but little worse for wear than did his associates, and when he brought in ten prisoners with only two men at his back, turned them over to the Thirteenth, and went in for more before anybody could thank him, "Uncle Billy" swore that man was one of the right sort, and asked him what he could do for him that very night. And then—so the story ran—Close said he guessed he'd like to be either a sutler or a quartermaster,—he didn't know which,—and for once in his life the popular general looked bewildered.

After Mission Ridge, where he got another bullet through him, and one that would have killed an ox, they simply *had* to put Close on quartermaster duty, he wanted it so much and had done such splendid fighting and so little talking for it. That was the end of him until near the end of the war. His train was captured by a dash of Forrest's cavalry, and, though most of the guards got away, Close went with his wagons. Andersonville was then his abiding-place for a time, but in some way he turned up again during the march to the sea, which he made on mule-back, and when Congress authorized the organization of sixteen regiments of infantry as a part of the regular army in '66, the great generals at the head of military affairs were reminded of Close. He wrote from somewhere far out West saying modestly that they had told him to let them know if they could ever be of any use to him, and the time had come. He had concluded to continue soldiering, and wanted to be a quartermaster. He was offered a first-lieutenantcy in the infantry, and accepted, though the examining board shook their heads over his ill-written papers; was applied for by the colonel whose life he had saved at Vicksburg, and who was now on "bureau duty" in the South; and on that work Close remained, despite some rumors of his unfitness, until the fever cut its wide swath in his regiment. The adjutant and quartermaster were both down when Close arrived and reported for duty. In his calm, stolid, impassive way, he proved vastly useful. Indeed, at a time when men were dying or deserting by scores, when even sentry-duty had to be abandoned, and when government property was being loaded up and carried away and sold in the city, it is difficult to say what losses might not have been sustained but for his tireless vigilance. He exposed himself fearlessly among the dying. He said he had had a light attack of the fever at New Iberia earlier in the season, and couldn't take it again. At all events, he did not. He was probably the only officer who remained longer than a week at the stricken post and escaped.

At last came the welcome frost, Yellow Jack's conqueror, followed by new officers and recruits in plenty, and Close's occupation was gone. He had helped to bury the adjutant, but the quartermaster proved tough, and—to Close's keen disappointment, as the boys began to say with returning health, appetite, and cynicism—recovered from his desperate illness and resumed his duties. When December and the new

colonel came, drills and dress uniforms were ordered, and Close got leave of absence and tried to get back to bureau duty, where they did not want him. Then he appealed to Farnham, and through him to General Sherman. His wounds made him stiff and sore: he couldn't drill or parade. It transpired that he had no full uniform, and his first and only frock-coat had been let out to the last shred and was still too tight for him. Then some queer yarns began to be told. He was a *quasi* executor for three officers who had died intestate, and who had little to bequeath anyhow. He had nursed them in their last illness, and such items of their property as had not by medical orders been condemned and burned he had for sale. Under the regulations the major was the proper custodian of the effects of deceased officers, but the major was himself almost a victim and had been sent North to recuperate after a long and desperate struggle. On an occasion when he simply *had* to appear in full uniform, Close turned out in plumed felt hat, sash, and epaulets which, when questioned, he said were the late Captain Stone's, and so was the coat. If nobody could be found to buy them, he would, but he did not mean to buy "such truck" until it was absolutely necessary.

Respect for his fighting ability in the field and his fearless service during the epidemic prevented any "crowding" of the old fellow, though there was no little talk about the habits he was disclosing. The bachelors and "grass widowers" of the infantry and battery started a mess, but Close declined to join. He explained that he preferred to board with a French creole family a short distance away, as he "wished to learn the language." They gave a big dance Christmas week and taxed every officer ten dollars. Close had nursed Pierce through the fever, and Pierce was treasurer of the fund. Close was accounted for as "paid," both for the original ten and the subsequent assessment of five dollars that was found necessary, but it came out of Pierce's pocket, for Close begged off one and refused the other, and Pierce would not tell until it was dragged out of him by direct questioning months after. It transpired that Close went only once a day to the humble dwelling, four blocks away, where he preferred to board. He assiduously visited the kitchen of Company "G" at breakfast- and dinner-time to see that those meals were properly cooked and served, and there could be no question that he personally "sampled" everything they had. He wore the clothing issued to the men, until the colonel insisted on his appearing in proper uniform, and then had to rebuke him for the condition of the paper collar and frayed black bow that were attached to the neck-band of his flannel shirt. He wore the soldier shoe, and swore that no other kind suited his foot. He had to write letters occasionally, but when he did so he repaired to the company office or that of the post quartermaster, and not one cent did he spend for stamps.

Indeed, it became a subject of unofficial investigation whether he spent a cent for anything. He bought nothing at Finkbein's, the sutler's, where indeed he was held in high disfavor, his war record and fever service to the contrary notwithstanding. He never touched a card, never played billiards, and never invited anybody to drink, even

when his brother officers called upon him in squads of two or three to see if he would. That he had no prejudice against the practice, then as universal in the service as it is now rare, was apparent from the fact that he never refused to take a drink when invited, yet never seemed even faintly exhilarated. "You might as well pour whiskey in a knot-hole," said the sore-headed squad of youngsters that with malice prepense had spent many hours and dollars one night in the attempt to get old Close "loaded."

He had to go to town occasionally on board of survey or similar duty, and always sought a seat in somebody's ambulance to save the nickel charged for a six-mile ride in the tram-car. When he *had* to take the car he would wait for some of the youngsters, well knowing they would pay his fare. Once when three of them "put up a job on him" by the declaration, after they were well on their way, that not a man in the party had less than a five-dollar bill, he offered to change the five, but refused to lend a nickel unless they gave their word, on honor, that they were not striving to make a convenience of him.

But the "closest" figuring he had ever done was that which he carried out for several months at the expense of a certain bank. Most of the officers on getting their pay check towards the end of the month would take it to the nearest bank or broker and get it cashed. Those were easy-going days in the pay department. Many a time the impecunious subs would prevail on the major or his clerk to let them have their stipend a week before it became due, and it would be spent before it was fully earned. Close never spent a cent, that any one could see or hear of, but he was on hand to draw it as early as any of the rest. He would take his check and vanish. The total footing up of his pay, rations, servant's allowance, "fogy," and all, was one hundred and some dollars and sixty-eight cents. They used no coin smaller than the "nickel" (five cents) in the South in those days, and it was the practice of the banks and money-changers generally to give the customer the benefit if the check called for more than half the value of the nickel, otherwise to hold it themselves. If the amount were fifty-two cents the customer got only fifty; if it were fifty-three cents he was paid fifty-five. Those officers who kept a bank account, and there were three or four, perhaps, who did so, simply deposited their check for its face value and had done with it. It was supposed that such was Close's custom; but he was wiser in his generation, as was learned later. Close took his check to the paying teller and got one hundred and some dollars and seventy cents. Then he deposited this cash with the clerk at the receiving window and was two cents ahead by the transaction. When it was finally discovered and he was politely told that hereafter he would be credited only with the sum called for on the face of his check, Close got it cashed elsewhere and deposited his seventy cents regularly as before. "But what he does it for is a mystery," said the bank official who let this sizable cat out of the bag, "for he never has more than a few dollars on deposit more than a week. He checks it out through some concerns up North."

No wonder the fellows wondered what Close did with his money. A soldier servant made up his room and blacked his boots; a company

laundress washed the very few items sent to her each week, and declared that the captain stopped the price of two pairs of gloves out of her wages because she wore the thumb off one of them scrubbing the dirt off the other. He never went to theatre, opera, or other diversion; never took part in any of the gayeties of the garrison; never subscribed for a newspaper or magazine, but was always on hand to get first look at those service journals which were intended for the post library. He smoked an old black brier-root pipe, which he charged with commissary plug tobacco, preferring it to all others. He chewed tobacco—navy plug—and did not care who knew it. He shaved himself, and when his hair needed trimming it was done by the company barber. He had no bills. He would be neither borrower nor—well, there *was* some talk about his lending money on unimpeachable security and usurious interest, but to those officers who applied, either in jest or earnest, he said he never had a cent to lend and wouldn't lend it if he had.

Then what on earth *did* Close do with his money?

Much of this was told to Lambert in New Orleans. More of it he learned later. On this particular day he was destined to have another peep into the peculiarities of this most unusual character.

He had walked perhaps half a mile, revolving these matters in his mind and keeping occasional lookout for Parmelee's (which was evidently farther away than he had been led to suppose), when he heard some one shouting after him. It was a soldier, running hard, and in a moment Lambert recognized in him the affable corporal who was the first to receive him that morning. This time the corporal saluted as he came, panting, to a halt. Possibly Sergeant Burns had been giving the company a "pointer."

"Did anybody pass you, lieutenant?—anybody on horseback?"

"No," answered Lambert, wondering what might now be coming.

"Well, cap says—er rather—the captain wants you to come back. Didn't *nobody* go along here a-horseback?" And the corporal was evidently perplexed as well as nearly breathless. "By gad, I thought 'twas takin' chances, even for the two of us. Two of 'em rode in an' sassed cap right to his face an' were off before a man of us could draw bead on 'em."

"Who are *they?*"

"Some o' the very crowd Parmelee nabbed last night. They must have cut across at the ford. They've finished *him*, I reckon, for one of 'em was ridin' his horse."

In ten minutes Lambert was back at camp, where all was bustle and suppressed excitement. Close was seated at his tent, smoking imperturbably, and listening to the tremulous words of a tall, sallow civilian who was leaning against the shoulder of a panting mule. McBride, rifle in hand and equipped for field service, was closely inspecting the kit and cartridge-boxes of a squad of a dozen men already formed.

"Lieutenant," said Close, "I've got to send you with a detachment over to the county jail. How soon can you get ready?"

Lambert felt a sudden odd, choky sensation at the throat, and was

conscious that his knees were tremulous. It was his first call, mind you, and it was sudden and vague. The symptoms made him furious.

"I'm ready now," he said, reaching for his handsome sash and belt, and disappearing an instant within his tent door.

"Ain't you got some ord'nery things? You don't want to wear such trappin's as them. I've got a sash an' belt an' sword here plenty good enough; and you can have 'em for half what they cost."

"I prefer using these, captain," said Lambert.

"Why, you may not get back in a week," persisted Close. "There's no tellin' where those fellows have run to. You ought to have some suitable clothes for this sort o' work—like mine."

"I've got something different, but I thought we were needed at once."

"So you be, 'cordin' to what this gentleman says. It looks like they must have stirred up quite a row; but you needn't worry. There'll be no trouble once they see the regulars, and if there should be, you've got me an' the hull company to draw on." And Close's face fairly brightened up for the minute. "There's your squad ready. Parm'lee 'll tell you what he wants done. Reck'lect, if there's any trouble you draw on me."

"I shall need some money, I'm afraid, if we're gone any time. That's the first thing I'll have to draw for."

Close's countenance fell. "Ten dollars ought to be 'nuff for you anywhere here. I could get along with fifty cents," said he, slowly. Suddenly he brightened up again.

"Just sit down an' make out them mileage accounts o' yours. —Here, sergeant, you and this gentleman go on with the squad. Take the county road. The lieutenant 'll overtake you.—Sit right down over there in Sergeant Burns's tent, lieutenant: he's got all the blanks and things. Never made out a mileage account? Here, I'll show you."

And while Close slowly began his calculations, the squad under Sergeant McBride tramped out upon the dusty red road, most of the men following as though to see them around the bend, while Lambert, vaguely troubled, and feeling, somehow, that he ought to be with his detachment even though his superior officer called him back, stood looking anxiously after them.

"I thought you had twenty or so left in your wallet, lieutenant," said Close. "Just look, will you? *You* needn't be in any hurry. McBride knows just what to do. I'd change them clothes if I was you."

Lambert had slipped his hand into his breast-pocket, then began searching the others. All in vain: the little, flat pocket-book was gone; and now it flashed across his mind that he must have whisked it out with his handkerchief, which he carried, after the West Point fashion of those days, in the breast of his coat, just after he started on the run back to camp. Even as he began to tell of his loss the men came springing down the bank and bursting through the bushes in their haste to reach their arms and equipments.

"What's up *now?*" hailed Close, still slowly writing and never moving from his seat.

"Firing over near town, sir," called a sergeant.

"That so?" asked the veteran, imperturbably. "Get 'em under arms, sergeant.—Guess you'd better ketch up with McBride, lieutenant," said he to Lambert, whose boyish face could not but betray his excitement. "Hold on a second," he called, for Lambert had darted at the word. "*Wait*, lieutenant!" shouted Burns, and, wondering, Lambert looked back. Close was holding out the pen to him.

"Sign these, first off, will you?" said he.

V.

Long before they reached the public square the firing had ceased. Overtaking his little command, which the sergeant had wisely halted "for orders" as soon as the shots were heard, Lambert led them at double time.

"Put a stop to anything they're at. I'll be after you with the hull company," Close had shouted after him. The deputy marshal had disappeared.

"Mr. Parmelee somewhere ahead?" panted the lieutenant to the sergeant trotting by his side.

"Somewhere *behind*, sir. He'll come gallopin' in after we get there,—perhaps."

The road led into town from the northeast. Lambert could see the railway embankment and the old wooden bridge before they rounded the turn from which they came in sight of the belfry and the roofs. Somebody had begun to ring the bell, and there came the sound of shouting, with an occasional shrill yell. Then more shots, a short, sputtering fusillade, and more shouts, suggestively derisive and farther away.

"What's going on, do you suppose?" asked Lambert of his bulky second in command; and McBride, with one hand steadying the absurd long-sword then worn by our sergeants, and the other clamping his rifle at the right shoulder, puffingly answered,—

"Havin' some fun with the sheriff. He had a nigger posse guardin' the jail. Folks wouldn't stand it."

Another minute of running brought them to the outskirts of the straggling town. Women and children could be seen peering excitedly towards the square. Two very small boys, hearing the heavy tramp, tramp of the infantry, turned and scuttled away for the shelter of an open door. Three hundred yards ahead a man in his shirt-sleeves popped around a corner, looked keenly at the coming squad, and popped back again. When Lambert, leading his men by a dozen paces, came dancing around that same corner and found himself at the northeast angle of the plaza, this same citizen was seated on the nearest porch, placidly smoking a corn-cob pipe and reading a newspaper, his boots braced against a wooden pillar and his chair tilted back against the wall. In similar attitudes of exaggerated calm, farther along in the direction of the post-office, were one or two other gentlemen of Tugaloo.

Only around Cohen's mercantile emporium was there faintest sign of excitement. There one or two trembling, pallid clerks were bustling about and putting up the shutters. The gang of negroes ordinarily loafing around the plaza had totally vanished. Lambert, expecting to find himself in the presence of a surging mob, came to sudden halt in sheer surprise. The squad "slowed down" at a sign from their sergeant, and then, closing up their rank, marched silently ahead in quick time.

"Where's the jail?" asked Lambert of his subordinate.

"Round there behind the next corner, sir,—where the bell is."

Three or four prominent citizens came strolling out of the saloon nearest the post-office, their hands in their pockets and quids of exaggerated size in their cheeks. The bell, under the impulse of unseen hands, was still violently ringing: otherwise an almost Sabbath stillness pervaded the town of Tugaloo. At the corner lay a gaunt quadruped, blood trickling from its nostrils and from a shot-hole in the side,—sole indication of recent battle. The jail door stood obligingly open to the declining sun. The barred windows were tightly closed.

"'Put a stop to anything they're at,'" repeated Lambert to himself. "But what *are* they at? How on earth can I find out?"

Like those of the jail behind it, the windows of the little meeting-house were closed, and apparently boarded up from within. The double doors in front were tight shut and decorated in one or two places with bullet-holes. The bell kept up its furious din. "Hammer the door with the butt of your rifle," said the lieutenant, annoyed to see that such of the populace as began to appear were looking on in unmistakable amusement.

"Guess they're all down in the cellar, lieutenant," said a tall civilian. "Want any of 'em? Reckon they'll come up 'f you'll tell Squire Parmelee to shout. Don't seem to see him, though." And the grinning countryman was presently joined by one or two of his friends. Lambert simply did not know what to make of the situation. Sergeant McBride was going around hammering at one shutter after another and muttering something about "dam fools inside." A corporal with a couple of men had explored the two rooms of the primitive building used as a jail, and now came out to say there was nobody there, which seemed to tickle the fancy of the rallying populace. Still the bell kept up its deafening clamor, and Lambert was waxing both nervous and indignant. The absence of the civil officer of the law—the deputy marshal or sheriff—rendered him practically powerless to act. He could not pitch into the people for standing around with their hands in their pockets and looking amused. There was nothing hostile or threatening in their manner. They were even disposed to be friendly,—as, when they saw Lambert take a rifle with evident intention of battering in the door, they shouted to him in genuine concern, "Don't do that, lieutenant. Those fellows will be shootin' up through the floor next. The squire'll be along presently. Let *him* do it."

Presently the squire *did* come, still "white about the gills," as the sergeant muttered; and him Lambert angrily accosted:

"What do you want us to do, Mr. Parmelee? We've been here several minutes now with nobody to report to."

"I s'pose my poor fellows are murdered to a man," cried Parmelee, sliding off his mule and handing the reins to a soldier, who coolly transferred them to the nearest post. "Can't you make 'em hear, McBride?"

"Not if they're all dead," answered the sergeant, disgustedly. "Which corpse is pullin' the bell-rope?" At this unfeeling remark the populace again began to laugh.

"Oh, you'll pay for this, you fellows!" tremblingly shouted Parmelee to the grinning group across the street. "If there's law in Washington and power to back it, you'll ketch hell."

"*Whawt's* been the matter, squire?" asked a citizen, soothingly. "Ain't anybody hurt, is there? I ain't heard nothin' of any row."

Parmelee pointed to the carcass of the mule and to some significant shot-holes at the corner. "I s'pose you'll deny shootin'—or hearin' any shootin'—next."

"Shootin'? Shootin' roun' *hyuh?* Why, doggone 'f that ain't the queerest thing! I *thought* I heard somebody pullin' off a pistol awhile ago. Don't you remember, major?—I reckon 'twas you I was talkin' with at the time,—I said there was a shot fired. P'r'aps that's what killed Potts's ole mule out *yuh.*"

"For heaven's sake, man," muttered Lambert, "stop that infernal bell and your own jaw. Can't you see they're just laughing at you?" And Parmelee evidently did.

"My God, lieutenant! they've mobbed the jail, let loose three of the worst scoundrels ever went unhung, and killed the officers of the law. They ought to be arrested right here,—every one of them,—'stead of standin' there insultin' the United States government. If Captain Close was here *he'd* have 'em in in less than a minute."

"He'll be here presently, if you want any arresting done. Meantime, the only row is that which your people seem to be making. Can't you stop that?"

Parmelee looked helpless and despondent. "Somethin's got to be done," he said, "or these rebels'll ride right over you. Why, every man you see's had a hand in this jail delivery. We had great trouble 'restin' those three scoundrels: the marshal's been after 'em a month, and he ought to have met us here, 's I telegraphed him. We fetched 'em here at four o'clock this mornin', an' not a soul in Tugaloo knew anything about it, an' the soldiers ought to have stood by us until the marshal came. 'Stead of that, they went on to camp and left us all alone, and just as soon as these people found out who were jailed an' saw we had no soldiers to guard 'em, why, I couldn't do nothin'. They just took my horse and—they'd have hung me, I s'pose, if I'd been fool enough to stay. I just 'scaped with my life. You've just got here, lieutenant. You don't begin to know what a hell-hole this is. These people are the worst kind o' rebs. Capt'n Close—even he wouldn't b'lieve it, but I reckon he does now, after the tongue-lashin' them fellers gave him——"

But Mr. Parmelee's description of the situation was interrupted by

the coming of Captain Close himself. Dressed precisely as when Lambert had last seen him at camp, with no more semblance of rank or authority than was to be found in a weather-beaten pair of shoulder-straps on his cheap flannel blouse, without sash or sword, but with a huge army "Colt" strapped about his waist, the commander of the company came strolling around the corner of the jail, looking curiously about its door and windows as though in search of signs of the recent affray.

"Thought you told me they'd shot the door into tooth-picks," said he. "I don't see no signs of bullets."

"Come round here an' you'll see 'em. *I* wasn't goin' to let my men be shot like cattle in a pen. I got 'em out o' there soon 's we saw the crowd a-comin'."

"Then you didn't even show fight,—didn't even attempt to hold your prisoners?" exclaimed Close, in high dudgeon. "Why, great Peter! man, your birds just walked out without any one's helpin' 'em. You and your cowardly gang walked off and let 'em go; an' they've taken our mule. That's the worst of it,—taken our mule to replace that dam carcass there, that b'longed to the father of one of the boys you brought in this mornin'. He told the truth 'bout it then, when he rode into camp an' said your posse had shot his mule an' threatened to shoot him. What sort of a sand-heap were you raised on, anyhow? Why, 'f a *baby* in the town I come from had shown as little grit as you and your folks have, its own mother would have drowned it in the mill-race."

The effect of this unexpected tirade was remarkable. The knot of civilian listeners, who had come to get such fun out of the situation as the circumstances would permit, and who had been indulging in no little half-stifled laughter, were evidently amazed at this new side to the Yankee officer's character, and stood silent and decidedly appreciative listeners to his denunciation of the luckless Parmelee. The soldiers, who had for some months been tasting the comforts of military service under civil control, and trudging all over Chittomingo County, day in and day out, on the mysterious mission of "serving process," were evidently tickled that their commander should at last have seen for himself what they had more than half suspected all along,—that Parmelee was an arrant coward, who had held his position and made his record for efficiency in enforcing the laws only when a big squad of regulars was at his back.

As for Lambert, whose sole knowledge of affairs in the South was derived from the accounts published in the Northern journals and inspired almost without exception by "carpet-bag" politicians, and who fully expected to find himself pitted against a determined array of ex-Confederates engaged in the slaughter of Federal officials, white and black, the young New-Englander began to look upon the whole affair as another practical joke devised by his new associates simply "to test his grit or gullibility." This, at least, was his first impression, until the sight of the main body of the company swinging into the square under command of the first sergeant, and another look at Close's burning brown eyes and Parmelee's hangdog face, convinced him that so far as they were concerned there was no joke.

But how about the chuckling natives now augmenting their number every moment? Certainly there could be no doubt as to the contempt they felt for "the Squire," as they facetiously termed Parmelee, or the ridicule which Close's appearance had excited until he had well-nigh finished his denunciation of the civil officer. Then for an instant there was almost a ripple of applause. They watched him as, in his uncouth, ill-fitting, unsoldierly garb, the commander strode angrily back and began searching the walls and window-shutters of the jail for sign of bullet-marks.

Meantime, gradually recovering confidence or hope, the besieged in the cellar of the meeting-house began to parley. The bell ceased ringing, and humble voices were heard asking who were outside. A brusque order in Close's gruffest tones to "Come up out of that hole and account for your prisoners," seemed to cause unlimited joy. There was sound of unbarring doors and scrambling on wooden stairs, and presently the portals opened an inch or two and cautious peeps were taken. The sight of the blue uniforms was enough. The defenders, white and colored, to the number of six, dusty but uninjured, came gladly forth into the afternoon sunshine. "By gad, fellows, we had hard work standin' off that crowd till you come," began the foremost, another of the Parmelee type. "There must ha' been half Chittomingo County in here, and the bullets flew like——"

But here a guffaw of derisive laughter from across the street, the crestfallen face of Parmelee, and the quizzical grin on the sun-tanned features of the soldiers, put sudden check to his flow of words. There stood Close, glowering at him.

"Flew like what, you gibberin' idiot? The only bullet-hole in the hull square that hasn't been here for six weeks is the one in that wuthless mule there. You dam cowards ran for shelter an' let your pris'ners loose: that's plain as the nose on your face. I don't care for the pris'ners,—that's *your* bus'ness; but what I want's *our* mule.—Lieutenant Lambert," he continued, addressing his silent junior, "I'm as ready as any man to fight for the flag, but for six months now I've been sittin' here furnishin' posses to back up these fellers makin' arrests all over the country, because them was my orders. *I* haven't seen a nigger abused. *I* haven't seen the uniform insulted. *I* haven't seen a sign of Ku-Klux: nothin' but some contraband stills. I've obeyed orders an' helped 'em make arrests of people I don't personally know nothin' about, an' you see for yourself they dasn't lift a hand to hold 'em. I'm tired o' backin' up such a gang of cowards, an' I don't care who knows it. March the men back to camp, sir. I'm goin' after that mule."

VI.

With the going down of that evening's sun Lieutenant Newton Lambert had finished his first day of company duty in the sunny South, and found himself commanding the temporary post of Tugaloo. The responsibility now devolving upon him was the only thing that enabled him to resist an almost overwhelming sensation of depression

and disgust. Marching at route step back to camp, he had held brief and low-toned conference with Sergeant Burns and learned something of the circumstances that led up to the events of the day. "Old man Potts," said the sergeant, was a character. He owned a place half-way over towards Quitman and so near the county line that nobody knew whether he rightfully belonged to Quitman or to Chittomingo. When he was "wanted" in one he dodged to the other. Two of his sons had been killed during the war, and the two younger were prominent both as citizens and "skylarkers," for "there was no mischief or frolic going on they weren't mixed up in." Sergeant Burns didn't believe in Ku-Klux thereabouts, but the colored folks and the deputy marshals did, and so the soldiers were kept "on the jump." Old man Potts had "cussed" Parmelee off his place two weeks previous, but had ridden in to Quitman and reported himself to Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Sweet, commanding the two-company garrison there, and said that any time he or his boys were "wanted," just to say so and he would come in and account for himself and them to an officer and a gentleman, but he'd be damned if he'd allow that sneak Parmelee on his premises. Then he had had high words with the marshal of the district himself. His boys had harmed no one, he said. They were full of fun, and perhaps of fight—he wouldn't own 'em if they weren't: but they did not belong to the Ku-Klux,—if there were anything of the sort around there at all,—and they only fought when interfered with. They might have expressed contempt for Parmelee, but *that* wasn't law-breaking. The marshal told him that very serious allegations had been laid against both him and his boys, as well as against friends with whom they forgathered, and warned him that arrest would follow if more "outrages" occurred; and the result was that only the interference of Colonel Sweet prevented a shooting scrape on the spot. Ever since then Parmelee had had some one watching the movements of Potts and his boys. There was a young lady over at Clayton's plantation to whom one of the boys was devoted, and Parmelee's spies reported there was to be a dance there. That's how he came to go over to Buccatubbee with the squad, but they only got Harry Potts and two of the Scroggs boys; Barton Potts wasn't there. They were riding home to Quitman County after the dance and "making some racket, as young fellers will, and Parmelee laid for 'em on the road." They were brought in to the jail by Sergeant Quinn and the squad and there left to Parmelee and his people. As for the rest, the lieutenant knew as much as the sergeant, except that "old man Potts" with his boy Hal suddenly rode into camp just after Mr. Lambert had walked away, and the old man had given Captain Close a piece of his mind, after which he and Hal with a couple of friends rode back townwards. All the shooting that took place was probably a *feu de joie* to the accompaniment of triumphant yells.

It was a fact that when old Potts with his friends, not more than half a dozen all told, came riding in to offer bail for the boys, armed only with the customary revolver, they were followed towards the jail by a party of inquisitive and interested townspeople, at sight of which array Parmelee's posse on duty at the jail had fired one volley from

that building and then rushed for the shelter of the cellar under the meeting-house. They had killed Potts's mule and wounded another, in exchange for which the Pottsites had ridden off with the first two animals and all the prisoners they saw. There was no one to claim the latter, and old Potts had coolly offered the former to the inspection of Captain Close: one proved to be government property, the other Parmelee's. "I'll just *baw*row these two to take us back home, an' then you gentle*men* can have 'em as soon as you'll send for 'em; but you'll hardly expect us to call again, after the reception accawded us law-abiding and peaceable citizens to-day." This was the majestic conclusion of Potts's remarks to the surprised but stolid captain. Then they rode away, and, crossing probably at the ford, made a circuit back through town, where they doubtless had a Tugaloo jubilee with their friends and fellow-citizens, to the continued alarm and dismay of the bell-ringers in the meeting-house, until warned that the troops were coming, when they deliberately withdrew across the railway track, firing off a parting salute and a volley of the characteristic Southern vocalisms known to fame as the "rebel yell." This was injudicious. It was all well enough to ride away in company with prisoners whom nobody claimed or appeared to care to hold, but they should not have rejoiced thereat with riot and ungodly glee. It was human and by no means divine. It gave the opposition too much to tell about in the startling reports that went broadcast over the North that very night and appeared with lurid head-lines in the morning papers on the morrow.

Parmelee had not been seen from the moment of the initial appearance of Potts and party until he came scrambling into camp on a borrowed mule. Later that afternoon, when matters had measurably quieted down, he made his way westward in time to tell at the State Capitol his story of the riot to his properly indignant chief, while, all alone, Captain Close was jogging over to Potts's on the "day accommodation," little dreaming of the ill repute in which he and his youthful subaltern would stand before the unthinking of their Northern fellow-citizens on the morrow; for, as was only natural, the deputy marshal had squared accounts with Close by laying the blame for the escape of the prisoners, the peril of the beleaguered posse, and the riot and insurrection in Chittomingo County upon the captain and his lieutenant, who, he said, though wearing the uniform and holding the commission of the United States, had refused to come to the aid of the officers of the law.

"I ought to be back by nine o'clock," was the message the captain told Corporal Cunningham to take out to camp; but Cunningham was the ingenuous youth who first accosted Mr. Lambert on his arrival that morning, and Burns had nearly shaken the life out of him when he heard the story the men were passing from lip to lip. Cunningham was a young fellow with a better opinion of himself than his employers seemed to entertain, and, though fairly educated in the public schools and in a business college of his native city, a fondness for Bowery life and association with Bowery boys had undermined his usefulness. He enlisted after losing his situation, and, coming to Close's company when

clerks were hardly to be had at any price, was put into the company office instead of the awkward squad. Then came a vacancy among the corporals; the young fellow, being a new broom, had swept clean, and was so helpful about the books, papers, and the like for six weeks that Close gave him the empty chevrons and gave Burns abundant cause for another outbreak of blasphemy. There might have been some way of licking Private Cunningham into shape, but there was none whatever of reforming Corporal Cunningham. He was not all bad, however, for by evening he began to realize the extraordinary solecism of which he had been guilty in the morning; so he was actually ashamed to go near the lieutenant, and never even repeated his message to Burns until nine o'clock had come and the captain hadn't. Then Burns went over to the lieutenant's tent, where that youth sat wrapped in his overcoat, trying gloomily and with stiffened fingers to write some letters by the light of a single candle.

"I suppose, sir, the captain meant to ride the mule back himself. He could have got to Potts's place before six and back here by eight, easy. 'Tisn't likely they'd ask him to stay to supper. I'm only afraid of his gettin' into a row, and him all alone."

"I wish he could have been content to send for the mule instead of going," said Lambert. "Any of the men could have gone, I suppose."

"Well, sir, the trouble is that he'd have had to send the men on mule-back, or else pay their fare over on the cars. The captain has a pass, and it doesn't cost him anything; and he's afraid to let the mule be gone over-night. It's mighty easy losin' 'em among all these niggers, and they might charge it up against the captain's pay. The captain has stuck close to camp so far as these night posses have been concerned, but he'd hunt the whole State for a lost blanket or bayonet. And he always goes alone—and gets what he's after, and he's had no trouble worth mentionin'; but that fellow Potts was impudent to him to-day, and he was slow 'bout seein' it at first; now, though, he's got his mad up and gone over there to get the mule and satisfaction both: that's what I'm afraid of, sir. He lashed Parmelee to-day for bein' a coward, and—beggin' your pardon, lieutenant—though the captain ain't much on military, he fires up like a flash at anything like insult to the flag."

"Do you think it advisable to send after the captain?" asked Lambert, after a moment's reflection.

"There's no way we *can* send, sir, 'cept afoot or behind a four-mule team in an army-wagon. We only had that one saddle-mule."

Lambert stepped to the tent door and looked out. The sky was overcast and the darkness thick. A wind was rising and whirling the sparks from the cook-fire over by the road, and from the pipes of the men sitting smoking and chatting in little groups about camp. Some had come to him at nightfall and sought permission to go in to the village, and he had felt obliged to refuse. After the events of the day it seemed wisest to hold them at camp, and he had so informed Sergeant Burns. As he stood there now looking uneasily about, first at the dark and threatening sky, then at the darker shadows about

camp, Lambert thought he caught sight of three or four forms, vague and indistinct, hurrying along the bank beyond the fire.

"Who are those men?" he asked.

"I don't know, sir. I warned the company to remain in camp. I'll see." And Burns turned quickly and made a run for the opposite end of the company ground. Some of the men started up and stood gazing expectantly after him, and the chat and laughter suddenly ceased. The shadowy forms had disappeared: so, by this time, had Burns. Then there came the sound of his powerful voice, out by the road:

"Halt there, you men! Come back here!"

Then followed a rush and scramble in the bushes, and the sound of footfalls, rapid and light, dying away in the darkness. Then some low laughter and comment among the men. Then Burns came back, and, without waiting to report, sternly ordered, "Fall in!"

Knocking the ashes out of their pipes and buttoning their overcoats,—a thing they might have overlooked before the lesson of the day,—the soldiers slowly obeyed the unusual summons. Burns got his lantern and quickly called the roll. Four men failed to respond. Leaving the company still in line, the sergeant hastened to the tents for the absentees. Two of the number were found placidly sleeping. Two were away entirely,—Privates Riggs and Murphy.

"If I'm not mistaken I saw three shadows," said Lambert, as the sergeant made his report. "What would the captain do if he were here?—send a patrol?"

"The captain never had a night roll-call, sir; but he wouldn't send a patrol. That's only a good way of *not* ketchin' men, unless they're too drunk to run. It wouldn't be of much consequence, only for that man Riggs bein' one of 'em. He's a troublesome case. If the lieutenant approves of it, I'll send Sergeant Watts and a couple of good men without arms. They can find whoever's out. What I don't like about it is that somebody jumped the fence and into the Walton place."

"The old homestead across the road?"

"Yes, sir. There's been some trouble between the captain and the Walton family. He ordered the men never to enter the enclosure on any pretext, the old lady made such a row 'bout it."

"Who live there? Surely they ought to welcome our sending responsible men over to drive off our renegades."

"Well, I don't know 'bout that, sir," said the sergeant, with a nervous laugh. "If there's anybody on earth the captain's afraid of, its old Mrs. Walton. She's a terror. Nothin' of the unprotected female about her, sir, though she and her daughters live alone there. Both her sons were shot during the war: one was killed, and the other's in Havana—or Mexico; said he'd never surrender, and won't come home. I reckon they're pretty hard up there, sometimes, but you should see how the old lady rides it over the captain, sir. I wonder she hasn't been over to pay you a visit. Shall I send after Riggs and Murphy, sir? It's a little like sendin' good money after bad. They haven't a cent, either of 'em, and if town was their object there's no use in their goin'; nobody would trust 'em."

Then came interruption,—the sound of a horn, an ordinary tin horn, too, floating through the dark and muttering night.

"That's her, lieutenant. That's the old lady herself. She reads prayers reg'larly at half-past nine every night, and some of the niggers are out yet. They used to have a conch shell that sounded pretty, but Parmelee said they had to sell it. They've had to sell pretty much everything, tryin' to keep alive."

Again the sound of the cheap and despised tin. Lambert recalled it as a necessary concomitant of the street-boy and straw-rides about the Christmas holidays, and its summons, he thought, was never to prayer: it called for many a lively malediction.

"Send Sergeant Watts, if you think it advisable," said he, briefly. "I'm going up on the road a moment."

Again the blast of the horn, short, *staccato*, imperative, and then an impatient, querulous voice at the north end of the porch,—a voice calling, "*You* Elinor! you wuthless black gadabout! wh' *ah* you?"

And as Lambert scrambled up the steep path and reached the road, another voice, low, tremulous, eager, close at hand, whispered, "Oh, I thought you'd never come! *Hyuh!* quick! Leave the money, *shuah*, and the pail, t'maw'ow night."

And then, with a rustle of feminine garments, bending low, a slender, girlish form shot across the beam of lamplight falling from an east window. Another form, also feminine, scurried away from the hedge-row, and something came rolling out into the road-way, clinking against the stones. There was sound of voluble reprimand and flustered explanation at the north end of the building, a quick, kitten-like patter of little feet up the rickety old steps in front, and in an instant the girlish form seemed perched on the window-sill. There a second or two it hovered, motionless, until a door slammed around at the north side of the house. Then in popped the slender figure, out went the light, and, but for the sigh and complaint of the night-wind in the rustling branches of the old trees about the veranda, all was silence at Walton Hall.

VII.

It was after ten when Captain Close returned, and barely eleven when he again set forth. This time a sergeant and ten picked men went with him, nobody but Close knew whither. "I may be gone two days, lieutenant," said he, in the laborious use of the title which among regulars "to the manner born" had long been replaced by "Mr.;" and had not Lambert asked for instructions, none, probably, would have been given. Of his adventures during the day he said not a word. He brought back the mule, and that was enough. The first thing Lambert and Burns knew of his return was the sound of his voice at the wagon, informing the guard that he wanted coffee and something to eat. Then, paying only vague attention to Lambert's congratulations on his safe return, he told Burns to get a detachment ready at once, then disappeared within the dark interior of his tent, leaving Lambert standing in some embarrassment and chagrin outside. "Looking to see if his

strong box is all safe," whispered the first sergeant as he came up. "It's under the boards—under his cot—and he never lets anybody come in, not even the marshal."

It was full five minutes before the captain reappeared. He struck no light meantime, but could be heard fumbling around in the darkness. When he came forth, he had some papers in his hands. "We'll go to your tent, sergeant," he said. "Your desk is handier.—How've you got along, lieutenant?"

"Two men are out, sir; Riggs and Murphy——"

"Dam blackguards, both of 'em,—'specially Riggs; almost the oldest soldier in the company, too," said Close, wrathfully, seating himself at the desk and beginning to arrange the papers for signature.

"I had been told I should find some splendid old oaks among the rank and file," hazarded Lambert, after a pause, and thinking his commander should give some directions in the case.

"Old oaks? Old *soaks*, most like," was the disdainful answer,—"'specially Riggs. He come from the cavalry. Why, I've had them two fellows tied up by the thumbs three times since last March; and it hain't hurt 'em no more 'n if they was cast iron. Better keep a guard over the mules while I'm away, sergeant—or, rather, lieutenant: you see, I ain't used to havin' anybody but the sergeant. Oh! Now 'bout them mileage papers o' yourn. You said not to send 'em. Why not?"

"You've made out a charge of some sixty-five dollars for transportation of a servant, sir: I brought no servant with me."

"What's the difference? The law 'lows it. Every officer's entitled to a servant. And if he does his own work he's entitled to what his servant would get. You didn't black your boots on the way, did you? You had a servant do it. He was with you on the train,—porter of the sleeping-car, wasn't he? *I* never go in the durn things myself, but you did, I'll warrant. Well, you paid him out of your pocket, every time you changed cars or boat."

"That may be, sir; but I can't sign any such claim as sixty dollars for transportation of servant when I paid no such sum."

"Then how're you to get your money back?—the dimes and dollars you've given to porters and waiters on the way? Every officer *I* know would sign that certificate without question, and every quartermaster would pay it. Captain Warren came with you to headquarters, at least. What d'you bet he hasn't drawn servant's transportation? You think it over, lieutenant. There's no sense in you robbin' yourself this way. Write down to barracks, 'f you like, and see what they say at head-quarters. They'll tell you just what I do."

"I'll sign the accounts without that, and get the mileage for myself," said Lambert. "I need the money. Then if it's allowable and proper I can collect for servant later."

"Not much you can't. There's where you show your ignorance. *Then* the government would make you fight ten years for it, even if you'd brought a servant with you. The way is to get it first and let them stop it if it's wrong. But here, I can't fool away time arguin' a simple thing like that. I've got to be miles away before midnight,

and, no matter who comes and inquires, you don't know where we've gone. Now you won't need any commissary funds or anything while I'm away. Just pay cash and take receipts if you buy vegetables for the company."

"You forget, sir, that my money's gone."

"*Sure* you hadn't anything but what was in that pocket-book?—Then, sergeant, *you* do it, and keep account."

"But, excuse me, captain," said Lambert, flushing, "I myself will need money. I must find some place to board. Keep those mileage accounts as security, if you like, but let me have twenty dollars——"

"But you hain't signed them: they're no good."

"I'll settle that," said Lambert, sharply; and, taking a pen, he drew a line through the item for transportation for servant and altered the figures of the total accordingly, then, still standing and bending over the desk, slashed his signature with a sputtering pen upon the paper. Close carefully scrutinized the sheet, compared it with its duplicate when that, too, was similarly finished, and stowed both away in a long envelope. "Sure you've got to have twenty?" he asked, as a soldier stuck his head inside the tent door, retired precipitately at sight of the junior lieutenant, and then, from without, announced that the captain was served. "Well, I guess I can get it for you—before I go." Slowly he finished, slowly signed, after close study of their contents, the papers placed before him, then slowly left the tent without another word. Not until he had buckled on his pistol-belt—he carried no sword—and was about to start with his silent and yawning squad, did he seem to awake from his fit of abstraction, and then only when Lambert appealed to him for orders.

"Oh, yes. Well, just have an eye on them mules, will you, lieutenant? Everything else, almost, is under lock and key. The quartermaster sergeant is pretty solid."

"But in case of disturbance, or demands for more detachments, or men wanting to go away?"

"There won't be nuthin' now fur a week. Do's you like about givin' the men a little liberty. They've had a good deal. Everything around here will be quiet enough, and you'll hear what I'm after—well, when I've got it."

That night, though worn and weary and downhearted, Lambert could hardly sleep. At eleven the little detachment had trudged away into the blackness of the night, and the tramp of their march was swallowed up in the rustle of the crisp brown foliage and the creak of overhanging branches. The men remaining in camp crawled back to their blankets; the cook-fire smouldered away, only occasionally whirling forth a reluctant flight of sparks in response to some vigorous puff of the restless wind; the sentry yawned and dawdled about the wagon and the store tent; even the mules seemed so sympathetic with their recovered associate that no whisper of a bray came from their pen on the bank of the stream. Lambert had received the assurance of his sergeant that the missing men would surely turn up before breakfast on the morrow, and had given permission to that harassed and evidently disgusted official to go to bed. Then, after a turn around his

sleeping camp, the young fellow went to his lonely roost "to think things over."

In the first place, as he lighted his candle, there was the tin pail which had rolled out from the Walton hedge-row, and which, on inspection, he had found to contain about two pounds of fresh butter, very neatly packed in lettuce-leaves. That proved that the Waltons still had something of their old garden left. Lettuce could surely be raised only under glass at this inclement season. He had hitherto had no time for close inspection of the contents. Now as he turned over the leaves he found a little slip of paper on which, in a girlish and somewhat "scratchy" hand, were penned the words, "Please send small currency. It's so hard to get change. You can have buttermilk to-morrow night if you'll bring a pitcher. Due, $5\frac{10}{100}$. You *must* pay it this time. *I must* have it."

"Now, who on earth is this young lady's customer?" thought Lambert. "Surely not Close. He never spends a cent on butter. Nobody else lives nearer than Parmelee's to the north or town to the south. Can it be that some of the sergeants have been buying supplies from this quarter and running up a butter bill?" Burns had spoken of trouble between the captain and the old lady and of all hands being forbidden to enter the Walton grounds on any pretext whatever. That, of course, did not prohibit the men from buying what the Walton servants offered for sale outside the fence, and if they were so straitened in circumstances they might be glad to find a market for their surplus produce even among the Yankee invaders, provided Madam Walton were kept in ignorance of the traffic. She was uncompromising. No intercourse with, no recognition of, the barbarians, was her rule to kith and kin, and the few negroes who still hung about the crumbling old place repeated her words with the fear born of long-continued discipline under her roof and rod in the days of their enforced and unquestioning servitude.

These and other items of information as to his surroundings the young lieutenant had obtained from Sergeant Burns in the course of their evening watch together. He had no other means of studying the situation, and was but one of many new and comparatively inexperienced officers thrown upon their own resources at isolated posts among "the States lately in rebellion." Not yet twenty-four hours on duty with his company, he had been ordered to proceed with an armed force to the succor of officers of law supposably besieged by a rebellious mob, and now, at midnight, in the heart of a strange country and far from the heart of its people he was commanding officer of his company and camp, without definite instructions of any kind and only his native common sense to guide him.

Lambert has since told two women—his wife and his mother—how his thoughts wandered back to the peaceful old homestead in the far Northland, and to the teachings of his boyhood days. He made a sturdy fight against the feeling of loneliness that oppressed him. He wished the wind did not blow so sulkily, in such spiteful, vicious puffs. It seemed as though nature had combined with old Lady Walton to give him ungracious welcome to this particularly shady side of the sunny

South. The wind itself was whispering sarcastic and withering remarks to him, like those the sergeant repeated as coming from Madam Walton to the defenceless captain; and even Burns's sense of subordination could not down his impulse to chuckle over some of them. What would Lambert do or say if the prim and starchy dame were to call upon him, as she occasionally had on his superior, driving him at last to the refuge of the nethermost depths of his tent, whence, as Burns declared, "the captain couldn't be induced to come out till the old lady was back inside her own door"?

The last time he "tied up Riggs"—a punishment much resorted to in the rough war days and those that closely followed them, especially by those officers who were themselves graduated from the ranks or the volunteers—it was for trespass on the Walton place. The fellow had climbed the fence and was pilfering among the old fruit-trees when caught by Madam Walton. That was bad enough, but he had been impudent to her, which was worse. The men themselves would probably have ducked him in the stream—the old, self-respecting soldiers, that is—had the captain not ordered his summary punishment. Lambert was wondering what steps he should take in the interests of discipline, when he finally blew out his candle, determined, if a possible thing, to get to sleep. It was just a quarter-past twelve when he wound his watch and stowed it under his rude pillow. His revolver, the day's purchase, lay, with some matches, close at hand. He had even placed his sword and belt at the foot of his cot. The last thing he thought of before closing his eyes was that he would have to get a lantern on the morrow, even if he bought it of Cohen; but it was also the last thing he thought of when the morrow came.

Was it the wind again, whispering ugly things, or the ghost of Lady Walton, with her acidulated tongue, that roused him, he knew not how many minutes—or hours—later? Something was whispering, surely. The wind had been doing a good deal of that sort of thing all the night long among the leaves, a good deal of snarling and growling at times, and there was muttered snarling going on around him now. That might be the wind; but the wind would not trip up over a tent-rope and say such blasphemous things about it, even if it *did* nearly pull the flimsy structure down. In an instant Lambert was wide awake.

"Who's there?" he challenged, sternly.

No answer,—not in words, at least,—but there was sound as of stealthy yet hurried movement, more straining at the ropes on the side nearest the captain's tent, and heavy, startled breathing.

"Who's there?" he repeated, reaching for the revolver. "Answer, or I fire."

Then came a mighty strain, a jerk, a stumble and plunge, the sound as of a heavy fall, followed by instant scramble and a rush of footfalls around the rear of camp. Lambert was out of bed and into his boots in half a minute; but in his haste he upset the chair on which lay the matches, and the box went rolling to the floor. Pistol in hand, he darted out into the night, and found it black as Erebus. Quickly he ran to the first sergeant's tent, but Burns was hard to

waken after the long day's work. Once roused, however, he was soon out, lantern in hand, while Lambert hastily dressed, and then together they scouted camp. A glance at their tent showed that Riggs and Murphy were still absent. A peep at the watch showed that it was almost two o'clock; a search around Lambert's tent revealed nothing beyond the fact that the corner peg to which the tent-fly was guyed was torn from the ground, and the soft, sandy soil showed that heavy boot-heels had made their imprint. Then Burns, still lantern-bearing, went crouching low around the back of Close's tent, while Lambert, with straining ears, stood stock still an instant in front, then, of a sudden, tore like mad through the rousing camp, out past the dim white canvas of the wagons, out past the startled sentry, up the steep pathway to the hard red road beyond, down which he ran on the wings of the wind till he reached the gate-way to the forbidden ground, for a woman's agonized shriek had rung out upon the night, and the sound of blows, of crashing glass, of fierce and desperate struggle, of muttered oaths, of panting, pleading, half-stifled cries, of wild dismay and renewed screams for help, all came crowding on the ear from the heart of the Walton place.

VIII.

As he rushed around to the southern side of the old house,—the side whence all this uproar proceeded,—Lambert came suddenly upon two dim, swaying figures. The one nearest him—that of a man—was clutching, throttling, apparently, a slighter form in white, a woman. The butt of his revolver straightened out the dark figure with one crack, and then for a moment everything was darkness and confusion. A lamp, held by some screaming female at a neighboring window, was dropped with a crash. The screams subsided to scurry and chatter and Ethiopian protestations and furious demands: "You Elinor! you black nigguh!—you let me out this room *instantly!*" Then rush of footsteps to the window again, and tragic appeals: "Mamma—*ma-am-ma*! Whut's happened? *Do* answer! *Do* make Elinor let me to you, or Ah'll jump out this window. Ah'm coming now." And indeed a dim, slender form could just be descried, arrayed in white, bending low from the casement, when Burns with his lantern came tearing around the corner. Then a majestic voice, imperious even though well-nigh breathless, was heard: "Katherine, return to your bed *instantly.* Do you hear? *Instantly!* And send Elinor to me."

That Katherine shot back within the sheltering blinds was possibly due not so much to the impetus given her by those imperative orders as to that imparted by the sight of a pair of shoulder-straps and the face of the young officer gazing in bewilderment about him. Well might he look amazed! At his feet on the pathway Private Riggs was sprawling, still half stunned by the blow he had received. On his back, amidst the wreck of a glass hot-bed, Private Murphy was clutching at empty air and calling on all the saints in the Hibernian calendar to rescue him from the hands of that old beldam. On the

pathway, in a loose wrapper, her bosom heaving with mingled wrath and exhaustion, one hand firmly clutching a stout cane, the other clasping together at her white neck the shreds of her torn and dishevelled garb, her dark eyes flashing fire, her lips quivering, stood a woman certainly not fifty years of age, despite the silver in the beautiful hair streaming down upon her shoulders, and the deep lines of grief and care in her clear-cut and thoroughbred face. She leaned heavily on the stick an instant, but raised it threateningly as the luckless Murphy strove to sit up and stanch the blood trickling from his lacerated hands and face.

"Don't you dare to move, suh," she panted, "unless——" And the uplifted cane supplied, most suggestively, the ellipsis.

"Oh, fur the luv o' God, ma-am, don't hit me ag'in! Sure I'd niver prezhoome, ma'am——"

"Shut up, Murphy!" growled Burns. "It's easy to see what brought *you* here.—Shall I let Riggs up, lieutenant? He's bleeding a good deal."

But Riggs didn't want to get up. He flopped helplessly back upon the grass-plot. Burns bent over and held his lantern close. "The man's drunk, sir," he said,—"and cut."

"*I* did that, I presume," said Lambert, still a little out of breath after the dash to the rescue. "I found him daring to lay hands on this lady.—Madam, I sincerely hope you are not injured. It is impossible for me to say how I deplore this outrage. These men shall suffer for it, I assure you."

With rapid step the corporal of the guard, bringing with him a couple of men and another lantern, came hurriedly to the scene and stood silent and alert, glancing eagerly from face to face. Two or three frightened negroes had crept around the rear portico and hung trembling behind their mistress. With a shawl thrown over her head and shoulders, a quadroon girl halted half-way down the steps from the side door, her eyes dilated, and her lips twitching in terror, until a low voice from within bade her go on, and a tall, dark-haired, pale-faced girl in long, loose wrapper fairly pushed her forward and then stepped quickly to the elder woman's side.

"Go back to the house at once, my child. This is no place for you. Go to Katherine and tell her I say she must not leave her bed. Go!" And silently as she came, but with infinite and evident reluctance, the tall girl turned and obeyed. Mrs. Walton had spoken slowly and with effort. Of Mr. Lambert and his party she had as yet taken no notice whatever. Again Murphy began to squirm in his uncomfortable couch of mingled mud and broken glass and head-lettuce, and the crackling accompaniment to his moaning once more made him the object of the lady's attention."

"Lie still, suh," she said, low and sternly. "You have broken moh glass now, suh, than youh captain can replace. Lie still whuh you are until my suhvants lift you out.—Henry!" she called.

"Ye-assum," was the answer, as one of the negroes came reluctantly forward, humbly twirling a battered hat in his hands.

"Go fetch your barrow."

"Indeed, Mrs. Walton," interposed Lambert, "you need not trouble yourself. The guard shall carry these two scoundrels to camp, and prison life at Ship Island, or Tortugas, will put a stop to their prowling. It is on your account I am distressed. We have no surgeon at hand; I will send at once for the doctor in town——"

She raised a slender white hand, relinquishing her grasp upon the cane, which now went clattering upon the gravel of the walk. It was a sign to check him, and respectfully he broke off in his hurried words. Then again she turned to the negro, who stood with twitching face, irresolute, beside her.

"Did you hear me, Henry? Go."

Again Riggs began to groan and stretch forth feeble hands. Burns looked appealingly to his young officer, then as appealingly to the lady. Clearly, she was the mistress of the situation. Lambert had quickly stooped and picked up the cane, but she did not see, apparently, that he wished to restore it to her. In the light of the lanterns the mark of Riggs's clutch was plainly visible at her white and rounded throat.

"Two of you lift this fellow," said Burns to the corporal; and between them Riggs was heaved to his sprawling feet. "Get him over to camp now and bathe his head. Put a bayonet through him if he tries to bolt. I'll be there presently."

And of Riggs, her assailant, and of Riggs's removal under guard, the lady of the Walton homestead took no note whatever. Rebuffed, yet sympathetic, Lambert again essayed to speak, but the rattle of the barrow was heard, and Henry once more loomed up within the zone of lantern light.

"Lift that—puhson—out," she said. And when Burns would have lent a helping hand, she interposed: "No, I beg you. My suhvants will attend to this." And neither Lambert nor his sergeant made further effort. Murphy, lifted from the wreck of the ruined hot-bed, abject and crestfallen, scratched and bruised and bleeding, yet neither so deadened by drink nor so stunned by the rain of blows which he had suffered as not to appreciate the humiliation of his position, was squatted in the barrow. At an imperious gesture from Madam Walton, Henry started to wheel him away, the corporal of the guard in close attendance.

And then, with calm dignity and recovered breath, the lady turned to the boy officer:

"I have not thanked you yet——"

"Oh, Mrs. Walton, I beg you not to speak of thanks. If you knew how—how ashamed I am, and my regiment will be—that any of our men could have dared——" The very intensity of the young fellow's indignation choked him, and gave her the floor.

"Once before this they came, and then I warned. This time, having no men to call upon" (negroes, it seems, could not be counted as such), "I was compelled, myself, to chastise. May I ask the safe return of our barrow,—it is the only vehicle the war has left us,—and that we may now be permitted to retire?" And she swept a stately courtesy.

"But, madam——" began Lambert, utterly chagrined at the attitude

of cold and determined avoidance in which she persisted, "you have been brutally handled; I insist on sending for our contract doctor: it is the best we can offer to-night——"

"Neither to-night, nor at any other time, would his suhvices be acceptable, suh. I need no doctoh. We learned—we *had* to learn—how to do without luxuries of every kind during the war; and Dr. Hand—I think that is the name of the physician you refer to—would be too much of a luxury at any time. I regret that your men should need his suhvices, but they brought it on themselves."

"They will need him more before the captain gets through with 'em, ma'am," said Sergeant Burns, seeing that his young superior was at a loss what to say. As he spoke, the tall, dark-haired girl once more appeared, and swiftly, noiselessly stepped to her mother's side. "There'd be no need of a court-martial or of your having to testify, if Captain Close could settle this—or let us do it."

"Mother, come in,—*please* do,—and let these gentlemen go," said the girl. "Indeed, we are very much obliged to you," she continued, addressing Lambert, "for coming so quickly. That one, who seemed intoxicated, might have killed mother, who is far from strong. They had opened the cellar door, you see." And she pointed to where the broad wooden leaf had been turned back, leaving a black yawning chasm.

"Your mother is faint," cried Lambert, springing forward just in time, for, now that victory was perched upon her banners, the foe soundly thrashed and driven from the field, nature—woman-nature—had reasserted herself, and the lady of Walton Hall would have sunk to earth but for the strong young arms that received her. Then came renewed outcry from within-doors. Miss Katherine could not have obeyed the maternal mandate, for there she was at the window, insistent, clamorous. "Bring her right in *hyuh!*" she cried. "Do you *hyuh* what I say, Estuh? Oh, who *day*-uhd to lock me in this room? You Elinor! open this do' *instantly*, I tell you!"

A moment later, when, by the light of Burns's lantern, now in Miss Esther's trembling grasp, the two men bore the limp and nerveless shape into the nearest room and laid it reverently upon the sofa, a wild-eyed and dishevelled young woman threw herself at her mother's side and began chafing and slapping the slender white hands and begging all manner of absurd and impossible things of the prostrate, pallid, death-like form. Elinor, who had obeyed orders and locked that impulsive damsel in, had now released her and then collapsed.

"Do not try to raise her head," said Lambert gently to the frightened child, who, having exhausted one effort, was now striving to revive her mother with passionate kisses. "We must restore the circulation to the brain. Pardon me: have you a little brandy? or whiskey?"

"There isn't a drop in the house," answered Miss Walton, piteously. "We had some, that had been in the cellar for years, that mother hid during the war; but—but—it was being stolen, or something—and she sold what was left."

Burns quickly left the room. When he returned, a few minutes later, he held forth a little flask. Mrs. Walton still lay senseless, and

her condition was alarming to one and all. Lambert poured out a stiff dose. "Make her take it all, little by little," he whispered to Miss Walton, and then, with calm decision, stooped, and, encircling the slender waist of the younger girl with his arm, quickly lifted her to her feet. A tress of her rich red-brown hair was caught in his shoulder-strap, but neither noticed it. Such was the patient's prostration that for a moment even brandy failed of its stimulating effect. Not until several spoonfuls had been forced between her blue lips did there come that shivering sigh that tells of reviving consciousness. The white hands began feebly to pluck at her dress and the heavy eyelids to open slowly. "We will fall back," whispered Lambert. "I'll wait in the hall."

But when he turned to tiptoe away, a very touzled, tangled, dishevelled, but pretty head had to come, too. There was too much of that fine, shining, shimmering tress to let go. Burns was already creaking out into the dark passage. Miss Walton was absorbed in her mother's face. Miss Katherine's rounded cheek had flushed as red as the invalid's was white, and both her tiny hands were madly tugging and pulling at the offending tendrils; but who could work to advantage with the back or side of one's head practically clamped to the work-bench? Miss Katherine could not tear herself loose except at the risk of carrying away a square inch or more of scalp, for the strap would not yield, and its wearer could not help so long as her own hands were tugging. There was every likelihood, therefore, that the tableau on which Madam Walton's opening eyes should gaze would be about the very last she would care to see,—the bonnie head of her precious child reposing, to all appearance, on a shoulder in Yankee blue,—when Lambert, alive to the desperate nature of the situation, quickly cast loose the two or three buttons of the flannel sack-coat then so much in vogue, and, slipping out of that and into the hall, rejoined his imperturbable sergeant.

"I hope the lieutenant will pardon my taking his flask. I saw it in the tent this evening, sir, and the captain didn't leave the key of the medical chest,—with me, leastwise."

"You did right. That was some good cognac they got for me in New Orleans. I hope it will revive her. Ought we not to send for Dr. Hand?"

"No, sir," whispered Burns. "She wouldn't have him for one of her niggers—and be damned to them. I know now where Riggs had been getting his liquor, and where our coffee and sugar has been going. He's bribed these thieving servants of hers to steal that precious brandy, and those dam scoundrels broke into the cellar to-night to get more."

"But they must have been drinking in the first place. Where could they have got *that* liquor? Hers was gone,—sold."

"In town, somewhere. I'll find out——" But here the lieutenant checked him. A feeble voice was just audible in the adjoining room:

"Have they gone? Have I been ill? Esther—daughter, see that—No! *I* must see that young officer, at once."

"Not to-night, mother," answered the elder girl, pleadingly. "Not to-night. To-morrow: you'll be rested then."

"That may be too late. Whatever happens, there must be no court-martial. He said *I* should have to testify; so would you. *You* saw, Esther, and if under oath we should *have* to tell——"

"Quick! Come out of this!" whispered Lambert, hoarsely, and dragged the sergeant after him to the dark and wind-swept shadows of the yard.

IX.

Sunday morning came, gloomy, cloudy, with the wind still moaning among the almost leafless branches and whirling dust-clouds from the crooked road. After a night of so much excitement camp slept late. Lambert was aroused somewhere about seven by a scratching at the tent-flap, and Sergeant Burns, answering the summons to "come in," poked his freshly shaven face through a framing of white canvas to ask if he might send the lieutenant some breakfast from the cook-fire. It was barely twenty-four hours since his arrival in camp, and so crowded had these hours been with event, experience, and novelty that the young officer seemed to feel he had been a month on duty. There lay his blue flannel blouse at the foot of his cot. Unseen hands had tossed it from the window at which on his first appearance the previous night a slender, white-robed form had been piteously crying for help. He drew it to him and searched the left shoulder-strap. Yes! Even now three or four long curling hairs were twining like the tendrils of a vine about its dead-gold border and across the field of sky-blue velvet,—another vogue of the day. "She had time to disentangle the mass, but could not see these fine filaments in so dim a light," he laughed to himself. "Only fancy what my Merrimac *madre* would say if she were to hear that a pretty head—a Southern girl's head—had been resting on my shoulder the very first night I got here! Only fancy what the damsel herself would say, if she had a chance to say anything! And as for *her* mamma—well, what *wouldn't* she say?"

Lambert had lots to think of as he made his soldier toilet and came forth into the gloomy, moisture-laden air, for the southeasterly wind was sweeping the rain-clouds up from the distant gulf, and nature looked bleak and dismal. Two items occurred to give him comfort. No sooner had he stepped out into the open space than the one sentry at the other end of camp shouted, "Turn out the guard—commanding officer!" which was unnecessary at the distance and under the circumstances, yet clearly proved that the disposition among the men was to "brace up" in recognition of the arrival of an officer who knew what discipline meant.

And then, looking suspiciously as though he had been waiting for a chance to undo the ill effect of his blunder of the previous day, there in front of Burns's tent stood Corporal Cunningham, company clerk; and the salute with which he honored the camp commander was as pregnant with good intent as it was clumsy in execution. Somebody had placed an empty clothing-box by the side of his tent, covered it with canvas fly, and set this improvised table for one with the best tins

the company mess afforded. Somebody else had carefully blacked the lieutenant's boots and shoes, and presently up came a young German soldier bearing the lieutenant's breakfast on the company cook's bread-board, which was covered with a clean white towel.

"Burns is one of the oaks, at any rate," thought Lambert, as the sergeant followed to see that all was in proper order. Ham and eggs, "soldier coffee," a can of milk, corn-bread and hard-tack, were set before him with pardonable pride, and Burns explained that they bought eggs, milk, and corn-bread of an old darky who came over from the village almost every day. Then Lambert bethought him of his captured pail of butter, and brought it from the tent. "This does not belong to me," he said. "It rolled out from the Walton hedge last evening. Do you know who their regular customer is?"

"I don't, sir. Yet I know McBride and others have sometimes had butter,—good butter too, like this. The captain doesn't buy any, and wouldn't allow the company to buy any *there*. Not that he cared, sir; only the old lady was so uppish and made such a row when any of our fellows were seen even talking to her people that he gave regular orders forbidding it. No one from the Walton place dare set foot inside camp, and he'll make it hot for Riggs when he gets back. Murphy is less to blame, but will have to go to Ship Island all the same, I reckon."

"How are those two this morning?"

"Riggs is stupid drunk yet, but Murphy swears he'd only gone to try to get Riggs out of trouble: he'd hardly been drinking at all. He begs to see the lieutenant, sir. He says he can explain the whole thing."

And so, later that morning, after Lambert had given his men a further lesson by inspecting both company and camp and pointing out no end of things which could not, he said, be tolerated in future, Murphy was brought to his tent. His face and hands were badly cut in places, but his bruises were of little account. With the best intentions in the world, the good lady had not the strength for the trouncing the fellow had deserved at her hands. The story he told was hardly credible. Lambert could have ordered him back with sharp rebuke for his falsifications, but a glance at Burns's war-worn face, clouded and perplexed, gave the young commander pause. "Do you really expect me to believe this?" he asked, and Murphy answered, "I'm ready to make oath to it before the praste, sorr."

And this, in effect, was the Irishman's tale. He had known his "bunky"—Riggs—only since that worthy's enlistment in the company the previous winter, but this much of Riggs almost everybody knew; that he had been a sergeant during the war days, and was serving an enlistment in the regular cavalry when deprived, for persistent drinking, of his chevrons. The troop to which he was attached had been stationed at Quitman and in this section of the South for a year or more, but was ordered to the Indian country just about the time of Riggs's discharge by expiration of term of service. Then, after a protracted spree in New Orleans, he turned up at the barracks and "took on" again in the infantry, and in the very company which, oddly enough, was so soon ordered up to the region he knew so well. Indeed, Riggs

claimed when drinking to have acquaintance not only with the Walton ladies, but with some of the most prominent men in Quitman County, and frequently boasted of the good times he would have could he only get over there. Another thing about Riggs: he had twice got Murphy to go as his substitute on certain detachment or posse duty, offering as excuse that marching wore him out, yet admitting to Murphy that there were other reasons. "There are men in this section who'd shoot me on sight,—get the drop on me,—pick me off from the woods or fences," he had explained. Murphy believed him, and believed, too, his statement that he had powerful friends even among officers and gentlemen who had fought through the war on the Southern side. "He got money when he needed it, and spent it like a gentleman," said Murphy; which, being interpreted, meant that he liberally squandered it on his comrades.

But Riggs had of late been out of money: he "couldn't hear from his friends," said Murphy, and was getting in trouble. He owed poker debts in the company and liquor debts in town. He couldn't get a drink on trust, and the men were shy of playing with him; but he had always been liberal to Murphy when in funds, and Murphy stood by him now. About nine o'clock, therefore, the previous evening, he noticed that Riggs was greatly excited when an old darky came shambling in and gave him a little note. The negro had occasionally come before, and did not seem to belong either in town or at the Walton place. Riggs stole out to the road, despite Murphy's warning, and came back in less than ten minutes, bidding Murphy in eager whisper to be quick and come with him. It was evident even then that Riggs had had a drink or two. Murphy reminded him of the lieutenant's orders and begged him to run no risk; and then Riggs broke out and told him that, come what might, he'd simply got to go to town, and Murphy with him. He would explain when they got out of camp, but there wasn't a minute to lose; and Murphy went along, "just to keep him out of trouble." Out in the darkness a stranger joined them, gave Riggs some low-toned orders, but refused to let him have another drink. They were stealing along the road together, trying to dodge the flickering firelight, when it suddenly flared up and must have betrayed them, for a moment later they heard Burns shouting after them. Then the stranger "lept the fince" into the Walton place; Riggs darted away and ran like a streak: so he followed Riggs.

When at safe distance from camp Riggs slowed up and told what he had agreed to do. At Cohen's store was a box containing some expensive wine and cordials which had been prescribed for Mrs. Walton two weeks before by their old family physician and ordered sent from New Orleans. It was one of the sad cases common in the South in those hard times. Miss Walton, who wrote the order without her mother's knowledge, had no money to send, and the firm had none to lose. She explained that the wine was needed at once, and the money would be at hand in the course of ten days. The wine was sent, care of Cohen & Co., with instructions to collect first; and not until this night had there been money enough to pay for it. Now "a gentleman," whom Riggs knew well, had brought them help; but he him-

self could not go to Tugaloo because of certain past events with which he was intimately connected, and none of the Walton servants dared go, because of the tremendous stories in circulation concerning the events of the day. The gentleman had come a long distance at big risk to see the lady, Riggs declared, and must get away that night.

In this dilemma Riggs was called on for help. His chivalric nature was aroused—presumably; or possibly "the tiger had tasted blood" and needed more. Riggs had got the gentleman's last drink, and the money for more was now in his hands. But the gentleman had stipulated that a reliable man must go with him to fetch the precious packet in case Riggs "got full;" and Murphy was the man. "We got the box, sorr, an' Riggs his bottle of liquor, an' come back all right, an' we stole in there as we were bid, an' raised the cellar door, an' I carried down the box to the fut of thim slippery steps meself, for Riggs was gettin' noisy-like. An' thin we stole away, niver disturbin' anybody, sorr, only doin' the poor leddy a kindness, as we were towld. We didn't see or hear annybody. It was *afther* it all the throuble came."

There was pathos in Murphy's description of the "throuble." Their task accomplished, Murphy sought to get Riggs to his tent, but the man had drunk just enough to be rabid for more, and in the struggle the bottle fell with the gill or two remaining and was smashed. This was indeed a catastrophe. Riggs had that fearful craze for alcohol which is satiated only when the victim lapses into drunken stupor. Murphy got him to the tent and to bed, and thought he had him safe, but awoke later to find him gone,—gone for more liquor; but where? None was to be had in camp, unless he broke into the captain's medical stores, which, Murphy argued, he wouldn't dare attempt with the lieutenant lying there alongside. All of a sudden it flashed over him that his wretched "bunky," after having faithfully acquitted himself of his trust before the fatal whiskey-logging of his moral sense, had now stolen off in the darkness to rob the very household for whose sake, or that of the bribing liquor, he had braved punishment. Riggs had gone back for that wine.

The Irish soldier has his faults, God knows, but desertion of his fellow, even in face of torture, is not one of them. Murphy stole away, hoping it was not too late to recapture Riggs, and came upon him, just as he feared, tugging at something at the foot of those dark and slippery steps. Then came a struggle that, after at last he had borne his fiercely battling comrade up into the night, left Murphy breathless and exhausted. And then came the rain of blows that toppled him, crashing, into the ruin of the hot-bed.

"She came upon me that sudden and furious-like, sorr, I couldn't explain; an' it was tryin' to pacificate her I was, backin' off, an' niver see the hot-bed behind me fur the hot batin' I was gettin' afront. An' thin whin she had me down on the flat of me back, an' graspin' at thim glass works, poor Riggs, niver knowin' what he was doin', sorr, only to help me, grappled with the ould lady for the purpose of expostulatin', an' thin that naygur wench run screechin' into the house, an' the young lady came shriekin' to the windy, an' the stranger—the

gentleman—lept to the side door, an' I a-callin' to him to come an' square me an' Riggs, whom he got into the scrape, an' there was more screamin', an' he niver so much as axed to shpake, but run fur his life when the lieutenant jumped in an' batthered Riggs, who was only askin' a chance to explain."

"Do you expect me to believe that any gentleman stood there and saw Riggs grapple that poor lady and never raised hand to stop it?" asked Lambert, almost angrily.

"It's God's thruth, sorr. He was makin' motions, crazy-like, but he niver came outside that door-way until he saw the lieutenant, an' then the lamp wint out, wid him a-runnin'."

The lieutenant pondered a moment. Had Sergeant Burns ventured on an expression of doubt, the interview would have come to an end at once, with Murphy in disgrace; but Burns looked full of honest perplexity and yet belief.

"You ought to have had sense enough to know I should be glad to send to town for anything Mrs. Walton needed," said Lambert. "Why didn't Riggs ask permission?—or why didn't you?"

Murphy was certainly frank. "Sure we both knew it would be anybody but Riggs the lieutenant would send. We were guilty enough of going to town without permission, an' drinkin'; but it was charity, not thavin', sorr, that we entered the garden for."

"You may send Murphy back, sergeant. We'll have to hold him until Riggs can tell his story. Of course," said Lambert, as the Irishman was led away, "if there's anything in this story about the stranger, it helps their case materially. There was certainly something queer about the agitated words Mrs. Walton used just before we came away, —words about their testimony and preventing court-martial. You heard, did you not?"

"Yes, sir,—a little, anyhow."

"Can you imagine who the man is, or account for his strange behavior?"

"I can't, sir. It might have been one of those three or four that Mr. Parmelee hauled in,—one of the Potts crowd; but the idea of his standing back and letting the old lady have that tussle all to herself! That couldn't happen, sir, North or South, unless——" And Burns stopped short.

"Unless what?"

"Well, sir, unless there were reasons he daren't let her know he was there."

X.

At noon that Sunday it began to rain, adding to the gloom of Lambert's surroundings, and he sat listening to the steady downpour drumming on the tautened canvas of his tent, thinking of the odd contrasts brought about by army life. This was his first Sunday with his company, and in every possible way it was about as unlike every Sunday of his previous life as it well could be. He was trying to write to the mother far away on the peaceful banks of the Merrimac, where the

rolling hills were by this time wearing their early mantle of snow, and old and young, farm-hands and mill-hands, a reverent populace, had obeyed the summons of the solemn bells that found no echo among these dripping woods, these desolate fields.

At intervals during the moist and chilly morning little squads of negroes had hung about the westward end of camp. Something of the events of the previous night had been put in circulation with the dawn, and, growing as it rolled, had attained huge proportions by the time it reached the outlying plantations five and ten miles away. This, coupled with the tremendous story of the jail delivery at Tugaloo, had been sufficient to draw the bolder of their number towards that centre of interest, the Yankee camp,—though farther they dared not go. At times there would be some rude soldier chaff between the men at the guard-tent and these curious visitors; and no matter how poor the wit, it never failed of its reward of abundant guffaw. The Southern negro needs no visit to the Blarney stone: his flattery is spontaneous.

When Lambert had finished his conference with Burns, and, as in duty bound, went over to the Walton place to inquire how its *châtelaine* had passed the night, he marched forth through a little congregation of shining black faces and obsequious and tattered forms, and had to run the gauntlet of a chorus of personal remarks, all in high degree complimentary, as to the style and fit of his uniform, as well as his general appearance. In less than five minutes he returned, but with such chagrin at heart that it must have been reflected in his youthful face. Serene in the consciousness that he was doing a perfectly conventional and proper thing, he had bounded lightly up the broad wooden steps and knocked at the door. It was opened almost instantly by the colored girl whom he had seen the night before and heard apostrophized as "*You* Elinor." The eager expression in her eyes gave way at once to something of disappointment and certainly of doubt.

"I thought—I thought it was Mars'r Potts, suh," she stammered. "I—I don't reckon the ladies can see you."

"Will you say to Miss Walton that Mr. Lambert—Lieutenant Lambert, if you choose—has called to inquire how Mrs. Walton is to-day, and that, if possible, he would be glad to speak with Miss Walton a moment?"

Elinor stood peering through about one foot of gap, the door she had so promptly thrown wide open having been as promptly closed to that limit. Lambert could not but hear other doors opening within,—could almost swear he heard the swish of feminine skirts, the whisper of feminine voices, low and eager. The fact that the girl stood there, barring the entrance and apparently afraid to go, added to his theory that she was being prompted from behind.

"Ah dunno, suh. Ah'll see," she said at last, slow and irresolute. "Whut, mum?" she continued, involuntarily, an instant later, turning her turbaned head towards some invisible presence in the hall beyond; and that settled the matter in Lambert's mind.

"Ye-assum," and slowly now the yellow-brown face returned to light. "Mis' Esther ain't very well, suh, an' she says—er rather—Mis' Walton sends her compliments to the gentleman and begs he'll

'scuse her. Dey don't need nuffin'," she continued, in her own interpretation of messages telegraphed from the dark interior.—" Ye-assum. Mis' Walton rested very well, considerin', an's all right to-day, but she don't want nuffin', suh."

"I had hoped to be able to see Mrs. Walton, if she were well enough, or else Miss Walton," said Lambert, firmly, intending that his words should be their own interpreter at the court within. "There are matters of importance on which I desired to speak."

Again Elinor, mute and irresolute, turned to her unseen mentor. There was evidently a moment of conference. Then the girl was suddenly swept aside, the door was thrown wide open, and there, while other and younger forms seemed to scurry away from both sight and hearing, there with a gray shawl thrown over her shoulders, calm and dignified, her silvery hair fluttering about her temples, and the lines of care seeming even deeper in the sad, clear-cut face, stood Mrs. Walton, leaning on the stout cane which had dealt such trenchant blows the night before. With a voice that trembled just a trifle despite her effort at control, she slowly spoke:

"You mean to be courteous, sir, in your inquiry, and for this I beg to thank you,—to renew my thanks for your prompt service of last night. But now may I say, once for all, that we need, and can accept, no further assistance, and, if you are sincere in your desire to be courteous, you will not again seek to enter my door?"

Lambert flushed to his very brows.

"It is a more important matter than you have perhaps thought, Mrs. Walton, that has made me ask to see you. One of the men who broke in here last night——"

"I know what you would say," she promptly, firmly interposed, again uplifting, with that almost imperious gesture, the fragile white hand. "I am framing a letter to be delivered to your commander upon his return to-night—upon his *return*," she quickly corrected herself. "It will cover the case so far as we are concerned. Meantime I beg to be excused from further allusion to it." And the stately inclination with which she accompanied the words was unquestionably a dismissal.

Lambert stood speechless one instant. Then, simply raising his forage-cap, he whirled about, and left.

The boy was thinking of his own mother when he tripped so lightly up that worn old gravel path on his way to inquire how he could be of service to one whose dignity and sorrow and suffering had so impressed him. He had donned his best uniform for the mission, and little dreamed how in so doing he had rendered himself much the more *persona non grata*. He, who could not war upon women and children under any circumstances, had not begun to learn how bitterly the recent war had borne upon the women of the South, or how, even so long after, they suffered from its effects. He had gone to offer the aid and protection of a loyal heart and a strong arm, and had not realized that it was the very last succor a Walton would seek, so long as both heart and arm were draped by the Union blue.

Not ten minutes after his return, discomfited and dismayed, there

rode up the muddy, red bridle-path—for it was little more—a broad-faced young fellow who was attired in the clumsiest of "store clothing" and whose lean and long-necked steed looked dejection itself as his vigorous rider dismounted, slung the reins over the gate-post, and, after one sharp and warning survey of the silent negroes still hovering about, swung cheerily up the walk. To him the old doors opened wide without a summons, and eager hands were thrust forth in welcome.

Lambert, hearing the first heavy drops come thumping on his canvas roof, thought it was the rain that so quickly thinned the group of darkies on the road. He could hear the mule-hoofs sputtering away through the mud as the rain came quicker and faster, but not until several hours later did further explanation dawn upon him. Then he heard Burns and Watts in conversation at the first sergeant's tent.

"Did you see how the niggers kind o' lit out when he came?" asked Burns. "I haven't seen him round here since August. Reckon he knows captain's away. He hates him like poison ever since cap interfered in that row he had with Parmelee."

"Looks like a pleasant enough fellow. I'd rather back him than Parmelee any day, 's far as looks go. What's he doing here?"

"He's some kin to the old lady,—they're all related hereabouts,—and she's sent for him to come, probably, after last night's row."

"But they're talking all over the company about Murphy's yarn,—about there being some relative there—some man—last night. *You* heard it when he talked to the lieutenant."

"Oh, yes," answered Burns, evasively, "I heard what he had to say, but Riggs shut him up short as soon as he was sober enough to know what Murphy was saying. Wait till Riggs tells his side of the story to the lieutenant. Then perhaps we'll know what brought Mr. Barton Potts over here."

Lambert was up and at the door of his tent in a minute. "Did you say that Mr. Barton Potts was at the Walton place now, sergeant?"

"Yes, sir," answered Burns, whirling about in the mud and promptly saluting.

"Then have some man let me know when he comes out. I wish to speak to him. And if Riggs is sober enough now, send him here."

Presently, looking moist, blear-eyed, and dejected, the ex-trooper and sergeant was marched up through the pattering rain, and, with the big drops trickling down from the visor of his old war-pattern forage-cap, stood sullenly at the tent of his young commander. The guarding sentry, after the fashion prevailing among some of the regular infantry at the time, allowed his rifle to topple forward from the "carry" into the grasp of the left hand, a foot or so in front of the right breast, and with this well-intended effort at the "rifle salute" of the '60's, Private Mulligan reported,—

"Prisoner Riggs, sorr; to spake to the lieutenant."

It was the first time Lambert had conducted an investigation of the kind, and he had no precedents to guide him.

"Riggs," said he, "Murphy tells me your going to town last night

was at the instance of some relative of Mrs. Walton's, who asked you to do them a service. Was that true?"

"It was, sir."

"Then he will doubtless be glad to come forward and exonerate you, or at least explain your conduct in the early evening. Your later conduct only a court-martial can properly consider. Where is this gentleman?"

"I don't know, sir."

"What is his name?"

"I——can't tell, sir."

"You know it, do you not?"

"I suppose I do, sir, but——I can't tell it."

"In the event of your trial he is the only man who can help you, and the report I have to make of your misconduct is most serious. Drunkenness only aggravates housebreaking and attempted robbery, as well as assault."

"I broke no houses, sir, and attempted no robbery. As for assault, the lady herself will say I meant no harm."

"But your own comrade admits he found you in the cellar entrance at the foot of the steps, on premises you were forbidden to enter, to all appearances stealing wine, and he was striving to get you away when the noise brought Mrs. Walton upon you. The case is flagrant."

Riggs threw his hands forward in a despairing gesture, dropped them again by his side, and stood silent.

"Do you mean you have nothing to say for yourself?—that you cannot disprove the charges?"

"I have plenty to say for myself, sir, but nobody to say anything for me. The worst any one can ever prove of me is that I've been a drinking man. I'm no thief; I'm no burglar; and I'd burn me hand off before I'd lay it to hurt a woman, old or young. I never knew what I was doing, if I grabbed the lady by the throat. But I'd be a worse man than the lieutenant thinks me if I'd do what he asks."

"This is nonsense, Riggs. What have I asked you to do that would be either criminal or wrong?"

"To defend meself at the expense of a friend, sir," said Riggs, with melodramatic gravity. "I'll never betray the man that's trusted me."

"Take him back to the guard-tent, sentry," said Lambert, hardly knowing whether to be amused or disgusted. "The man isn't sober yet."

And then for the first time the young officer became aware of the presence of a horseman at the side of his tent. With his hat-brim pulled down over his eyes and the rain dripping from bit and boot and bridle-rein, there sat his acquaintance of the owl train,—Mr. Barton Potts.

"One of your men said you wished to see me, lieutenant," said Mr. Potts, with a courteous wave of his hand. "I was coming anyhow, but rode round from the bahn yawnduh and came in 'long the branch. Excuse me if I've stumbled on something I wasn't expected to hear."

"Certainly, Mr. Potts. Can you dismount and come in? I much want to talk with you."

"And I want to have a talk with you, lieutenant,—*ve'y* much,—and I'm coming for the purpose, but not just now. There are some matters I must 'tend to in town for my aunt, Mrs. Walton, at once. But let me add my thanks to hers—and much more than hers—for your prompt assistance last night. I know that man by sight. I've seen him around here befoh, and it's Gawd's mercy I wasn't there last night. I'd 'a' shot him dead."

"You can be sure he shall not escape justice, Mr. Potts; though your aunt seems to refuse to see me with regard to the matter."

"I'll explain all that later, suh," said Potts, lowering his voice. "I've simply *got* to go at once. But I'll see you to-night; and meantime let me repeat what I said. You shan't lack for a friend round heah, suh. You treated me like a gentleman when I was drunk and possibly offensive,—though I hope not, suh,—and you've behaved like a gentleman to my people, and by and by they'll see it. Just you wait. By the bye, you remember Colonel Scroggs?"

"I don't think I do. Some of that name were among the prisoners who escaped yesterday, I'm told."

"Yes, suh. The same family, suh; Colonel Scroggs's brothers. I can't discuss *them* just now, but if the colonel should come here to see you before Captain Close gets back, if you'll take my advice, you'll listen to him. He wants to speak about that arrest, and square things; and—well, I know a gentleman when I see one, just as I know a rough—like that soldier you were examining. The colonel was conductor of our train night before last. Now I've got to ride like hell. Good-day, suh."

And, pulling off his hat and sticking spurs to his mud-covered steed, Mr. Potts galloped away along the Tugaloo road into the gathering darkness.

Soon after nightfall the rain ceased and the wind died away. For the first time since he had turned in the night before, Lambert bethought him of the lantern he had purposed buying, even if he had to send to Cohen's on a Sunday. Burns sent some candles over from the company stores, and the young German "striker" set two of them alight in his tent, with empty whiskey-bottles—off which he had deferentially washed the labels—as candlesticks.

One thought led to another. The proposed purchase reminded Lambert that all the money in his possession was now the twenty-dollar bill borrowed of Close, and this reminded him that he wanted five dollars in small currency,—"shinplasters," as the miniature greenbacks were called at the time. Since hearing Murphy's story he better understood the straits to which his neighbors were reduced, and he had determined that the aid he had proffered in one way should, despite Madam's high-spirited rejection, be rendered in another.

At eight o'clock he had secured the amount he needed through the good offices of the first sergeant, and he was wondering how soon he might expect the visit of Colonel Scroggs and what could be its purpose, when all of a sudden the chatter at the other end of

camp told him of the return of the detachment sent out the previous night; but it was Sergeant McBride, not his company commander, who met him at the tent-door.

"The captain's compliments, an' he'll be back by an' by, sir. He stopped over to have it out with somebody that fooled him."

"Stopped over where, sergeant? Not alone, I hope?"

"No, sir; the sheriff was along, an' two others. They were talking with Mr. Scroggs—or Colonel Scroggs—and a young fellow they called Potts, who met us across the track on the Quitman road. The captain said you wasn't to worry about him, but we didn't get the parties the sheriff was after, and the captain thinks he knows who threw us off the scent."

Manifestly nothing was to be done but await the captain's return, and nine o'clock came without him. Lambert had determined to investigate the butter market, however, and time was not hanging heavily upon his hands by any means. Throwing a light-blue overcoat, such as was worn by the rank and file, over his uniform, he sallied forth just after nine o'clock, made his way around the camp until he reached the road, and followed it to the gap among the rose-bushes whence had rolled the tin pail on the previous night. All was dark and still. Setting the pail just within the hedge, he patiently waited. Presently voices—feminine voices—became faintly audible. "Elinor" had evidently been pushed forward *en reconnoissance*, and, after her recent nerve-racking experiences, didn't like the detail.

"I tell yo' dey ain' no one 'bout, Mis' Katie. I done felt fur de pail, an' 'tain't day-h," was her protest. At this Lambert saw fit to give a low whistle, at sound of which Elinor, with prodigious rustle of skirts, bolted back towards the house, and her unseen companion, after emphatic and scornful reference to "bawn cowuds," came hurriedly forward, but paused at discreet distance.

"You're theh, ah you?" was the semi-assertive, semi-interrogative remark in disdainful and truculent tone. "Ah hope you've got that money at last."

For all answer Lambert reached in and shook the pail. The combination of "shinplasters" and small coin within gave a reassuring rattle. Eagerly the girl bounded to the hedge. He could just discern the slender little form and the tumbled head of hair as she dropped the enfolding shawl and stooped to take her prize,—which the unprincipled young man had by this time cautiously withdrawn. He could hear her eager breathing and the patter of her hands among the rain-laden branches.

"Whuh on earth" (*who* on earth can spell the word as a real Southern girl says it?) "did you hide that pail? Ah've no time fo' *nawn*sense."

Silence a moment.

"Look *hyuh*, Mr. Yankee! Ah'm not accustomed to being made a fool of, 'n' Ah want that money. Ah've had to wait too long already."

A sound as of something shaking in a tin vessel, but farther away, towards a broader gap in the dark hedge.

"Ah'm not going up *thuh*. Ah told you twice befoh. You bring

that pail back hyuh" (indignantly). "Ah don't believe you've gawt the money at all" (tentatively). "If you had, no gentleman would keep me waiting—when we need it so much." (Symptoms of vanishing nerve, and again a tempting rattle.) "Ah *can't* go there" (pleadingly now). "Please bring it hyuh, Mr. Riggs. Brothuh Floyd would be fuyious if he knew" (pause)—"an' we had such awful trouble las' night, —all on account of some of your rascally——Oh! whut's that new lieutenant's name?" (Sudden change of theme and tone.)

"His name's Ike," was the response in a hoarse whisper across the dripping rose-bushes.

"Ah don't believe a wuhd you say. Whut's his *real* name?"

"Ask Mr. Potts if his name isn't Ike; and come and get your money."

"Ah don't have a chance to ask Mr. Potts anything. They don't allow me in the pahlor when Mr. Bahton Potts comes. Ah'm too much of a child to be trusted with family secrets, it seems; though Ah'm not too young to find out how much we need money.—Whuh's that pail?"—suddenly coming down to business again.

Lambert gave it a shake, this time within reach of a little hand that darted in among the bushes and firmly closed upon his own.

"You let go that pail!" was the imperious demand from within.

"I can't—till you let go my hand," from without.

"Ah don't *want* your hand. Ah want——"

"I didn't offer it, but, since you like it so much, here's the other." And through the darkness another hand, with soft warm palm and long, slender fingers, closed in upon the hot little paw straining and tugging at the original occupant of the handle. Instantly, with indignant force, the enfolded member was snatched away, and the stooping girl sprang to her feet, wild-eyed and alarmed.

"Wh' *ah* you?" she panted. "That's not Sergeant Riggs." A window was suddenly raised back towards the house; the mournful toot of a tin horn began. "Quick! Ah've *got* to go. Roll that pail through. Why didn't Mr. Riggs come?"

"He's detained,—on duty; but it's all right. Where's the buttermilk?"

Through the trees behind the girl came Elinor at top speed: one could hear the rustle rods away. "F' Gawd's *sake*, Mis' Katie, come quick. Mis' Walton's callin'."

But Kate was fumbling for something in her pocket and bending forward to the hedge. The next instant, with brilliant flash, the glare of a parlor match leaped out one second on the night and fell full on a laughing, handsome young face peering in from under the visor of an infantry forage-cap. One second only, and down went the match, and with stifled cry away bounded the youngest daughter of the household of Walton,—even the precious pail forgotten.

Ten minutes later a horseman came galloping up the muddy road and inquiring eagerly for the lieutenant. Lambert recognized him as one of the deputies or assistants engaged in Saturday's affair at the jail. He handed a folded paper to the young officer, and, in low, excited tones, began some explanatory comments.

"Wait," said Lambert. "Let me read."

Tearing open the paper, by the dim light of Burns's lantern he made out the following:

"LIEUTENANT LAMBERT:

"Post guard at once around Walton place, so as to prevent any men from getting in or out. Take half the company if you need it. I'll be there in half an hour.

"CLOSE,
"*B'vt. Capt. Com'd'g.*"

XI.

At ten o'clock that dark and gloomy Sunday night Mr. Lambert stood in front of his tent, leaning on his sword and listening in silence to the conference going on between his commander and the civil officers of the law. Close had come home in high dudgeon, and was, as usual, slow and cautious, but more than usually reluctant and suspicious. Fuming over the failure of the mission on which he had started so confidently, believing himself "tricked by the enemy," and now offered ample revenge and assured of success through the information tendered him, he nevertheless faltered. Lambert, returning from the round of his sentries, was taken unawares by the sudden question,—

"This gentleman says the old lady knew just where we had gone and just when we would get back. What do *you* think of it?"

"It's a matter I know nothing about, sir," was the answer, "except that she did say she was writing a letter to be given you on your return this evening, and instantly corrected herself by saying on your return."

"Yes. Here's the letter, by Jove, and it's a worse puzzle than before. And here's the deputy marshal back with increased powers, new orders, search-warrants, and God knows what all.—I'm willing enough to back you in dealing with men, Mr. Parmelee," said the captain, turning again to the eager civilian, "but the lieutenant has had these sentries posted forty minutes and there hasn't been a sound. I don't want any searching of a house that holds nothing but women, because you think some of your jail-birds are there——"

"I tell you, captain, there's no room for doubt. The negroes have seen them. *They* told Mr. Jarvis, here, and told him the mules were to be there before ten o'clock to carry 'em off out of harm's way. Your man Murphy admits he saw one last night,—one of the Scroggses, sure, by the description, and his brother is with him there, I'll bet a hat."

"I don't believe it," sturdily answered Close. "Only last August she turned Walton Scroggs away from her door with such a tongue-lashing as *I* never heard; an' that's saying a good deal. She forbade his ever setting foot within her gates again. I heard her; so did half the men in this company."

"I know all about that. He has been in love with his cousin, the

elder of the Walton girls, as long as I can remember, and because of his shiftless habits the old lady wouldn't listen to it. Then they took to meeting by stealth, and she found it out. She discharged old Rasmus for no other reason than that he carried letters for them. I've tried to bribe him twice to tell where Wal Scroggs was hiding, but the old nigger's a dam fool,—with a starving wife, too. They tell me he was seen round here a day or two since, asking for Riggs, and he's been carrying letters again. The old lady wouldn't have him there before, perhaps, but she would shelter him now, when the government demands his surrender. But, even if *she* wouldn't, Esther Walton would. I tell you they're *there*, captain, and they'll be off and out of our reach this night if you fail to take them now."

Close was pulling on a soldier's overcoat at the moment, and stopped to listen to some sound down the dark recesses of the "bottom" along the winding stream.

"It's the mules now!" began Parmelee, excitedly, but Close held up a warning hand.

"If it is, my men will nab 'em, that's all. Now you've been the means of my takin' the men on more'n one long wild-goose chase afoot —that telegram of yours was enough to give the whole scheme away— and of my bein' invited to be dam fool enough to fight two duels this afternoon. Both Colonel Scroggs and Mr. Barton Potts, by thunder, want me to go out and be shot because I preferred to satisfy myself Mr. Wal Scroggs wasn't in the old Gibson place, 'stead of takin' their word of honor for it. There's a sick lady there who was scared of Yankee uniforms; but I'd rather search all Tugaloo and Quitman and hell together than rout out old Mis' Walton to-night. They can't get out past my sentries. They're sure to be nabbed if they try. Let 'em try, I say. It's the easiest way to settle the whole business. Then they can be arrested without disturbin' anybody in the house."

But Parmelee was dissatisfied. He had been chaffed, jeered at, maddened over the escape of his prisoners. Two of them—the worst of the lot, so far as he could judge—were here now, within his grasp, if he could but persuade Close to act. He had still a card to play, and it was a trump lead:

"I *did* send you a telegram steering you to Gibson's, and I did it because the marshal himself so directed; for it was he who was sure that was where they had taken refuge. Scroggs and his precious kinsman, Potts, probably got warning in time to send their two refugees away, and now they've had the cheek to hide them here, right under your nose. Talk about the record you've made as a preserver of the peace down here: how'll it read all over the North that, after being released from jail in the presence of Captain Close's company, the worst of the gang—men under indictment for murderous assault on United States officers in discharge of their duties—came and took up their residence across the road from Captain Close's camp and dared him to take them? That's the way it will read, by God, if you don't act to-night."

For a moment Close simply stared at the man. Parmelee was no fighter, man to man, steel to steel; *that* the war veteran knew well;

but the Yankee school-master of the *ante bellum* days had learned to use his wits and tongue. He could argue, if he couldn't face a bullet. The stalwart soldier who, single-handed, had captured a squad of astonished trench-defenders before Vicksburg and had faced the blazing battle-line with dauntless front a score of times, looked helplessly a moment into the face of this keen fencer, then turned appealingly to the young West Pointer, as though to ask, "Isn't there something in your education to answer this?" But Lambert was silent. From first to last the lesson taught him at the National Academy was subordination of the military to the civil authority.

"Well, go ahead. You're boss, I s'pose. I can only follow. What d'you want me to do?" said Close.

"I want you to search that house and get those men," was Parmelee's answer.

And then there was another moment of oppressive silence; then sudden start and alarm.

Down the Tugaloo road to the south, at the farthest corner of the fence which surrounded the Walton place, there was a pathway leading through the brush to the level "bottom" below. Somewhere in this direction, but beyond the corner, only a few seconds before, had been heard a sound like that of a bray nipped suddenly in the bud,—of a mule's essay at vocalism checked summarily with a club. At this point where road and pathway came together Lambert had posted Private Green, a reliable soldier of many years' experience, and when Green challenged there was reason for it. Low and stern his voice was heard distinctly at the listening camp,—"Who comes there?" followed almost immediately by the sharp order, "Halt! *Halt*, or I fire."

Waiting for no order, Lambert was off like a dart, Burns following with a lantern. Again came the cry "Halt!" but the promised shot was not heard. Even when running at speed past the gate of the Walton place, the young officer could not resist a quick glance at the dark façade of the old homestead. Already a light was dancing along the portico, another gleaming at an upper window.

"What's the matter, sentry?" he panted, as he came upon the dark figure at the turn of the road. Green, with his rifle at "ready," was peering into the gap in the tangle of shrubbery.

"Some one was coming up there, sir, and ran the instant I challenged. I ought to have let him get up to me and then halted him, but I had regulations instead of sense in my head," said Green, a New-Englander with a propensity for talk. "He's out o' harm's way——"

But Lambert waited to hear no more. With Burns at his heels he sprang down the dim pathway, and had not gone thirty yards before he came upon some struggling objects crashing into the brush towards the stream. "Halt!" he shouted, and, while something halted, other somethings, with muttered oaths, went plunging on. He heard a splash, hoofs clattering over gravel, the lashing of a whip, and then all was still across the dark open space through which flowed the sluggish "branch." But here among the bushes were two wondering quadrupeds, one a mule with broken bridle-rein, the other, as Burns's lantern

speedily showed, a Cherokee pony,—both saddled. A corporal came running to join them, and in a moment the beasts were led back to the road-way, where Close and Parmelee by this time stood ready to receive them. One glance was all the latter needed.

"What did I tell you, captain?" said he, in triumph. "That is Wal Scroggs's own pony, and the master's hiding there at the Walton place."

Ten minutes more, and a strange, solemn scene was being enacted at the head of the steps leading up to that broad, vine-covered old porch, whose dingy white columns loomed dim and ghostly in the glare of lantern and candle. The door was thrown wide open, and on the worn coping-stone, calm, dignified, erect, even though leaning heavily upon her cane, a lighted candle held high over the shimmering gray of her well-poised head, her stately, slender form garbed in some dark clinging robe, stood the mistress of the house, the clear-cut, pallid face standing forth against the black background of the hall-way like some exquisite cameo, the thin, sensitive lips quivering just a trifle at the drooping corners of her firmly-set, almost colorless mouth. In front of her, his brown head bared, his burly form nearly concealed in his light-blue overcoat, an almost pleading look in his soft brown eyes, was Close, the hero of a score of battles. On his right, folded and formidable-looking documents extended in an unsteady hand, also with uncovered head, stood Parmelee, representing the majesty of the law. To the left of the commander and a pace retired, buttoned to the throat in the uniform of his rank and girt with sash and belt, stood young Lambert, obedient to orders. Behind them, and almost at the top of the steps, armed and equipped, a sergeant and two soldiers of the guard. Back, farther down the steps, still others were grouped, the fixed bayonets gleaming in the light of the two lamps, one held by the amazed woman at the threshold, the other swinging from the gloved hand of the sergeant of the guard.

"What you say, sir, is absurd,—impossible. At no time, under no circumstances," Mrs. Walton was saying, "could the gentleman you name be secreted in that room."

"Madam," replied Close, his deep voice trembling, "nobody can feel more sorry about this than I do. I'd rather go through the whole war over again than be here on such an errand to-night, but—a soldier must obey his orders. I *saw* him, madam, at that window. These gentlemen saw——"

"*Gentlemen!* Gentlemen, sir, never could connive at such an outrage. That is my daughter's room,—Miss Esther Walton's."

Dead silence for a moment, solemn and impressive indeed, for Close turned helplessly to the supporter on his right, unable to face such majesty of confidence and conviction, unable to say the words that could sound only like insult intensified. It was Parmelee whose sense of duty rose superior to exalted sentiment.

"Madam," he began, stepping forward, "these papers are full warrant for my action. I know two men to be secreted here. I, too, saw one at that window, and the law must take its course."

"*Stop!*" she cried. "I have said that was my daughter's room.

One of your party, at least, has the appearance of a gentleman. Lieutenant Lambert, is it possible that you—that *any* graduate of West Point—can stand here and permit such outrage as this? Would you allow your sister's room to be searched for—oh, my God! nothing we have had to bear was comparable to this. I give you my word of honor no such man is, or has been——"

But she got no further. Out from the dark hall-way, with bounding step, tall, slender, and athletic, sprang a young fellow with the warning cry, "*Mother!* not another word."

She strove to check him as he pushed his impetuous way past her. With a wail of anguish unspeakable she threw aside her cane and seized him by the arm. Down went the candle sputtering to the floor. "Floyd—Floyd! Oh, my boy, what have you done?" she moaned, and bowed her gray head upon the broad young shoulder.

And then, with just a touch of the melodramatic in his bearing, the youth folded his arms and stood erect before the astonished group of officials.

"I reckon, gentlemen, *I'm* the man you want."

Close looked at him in bewilderment, then turned to Parmelee, whose face, whether through fear or excitement, was twitching nervously, and who stood staring blankly at the stranger. From the hall-way came creeping hurriedly forth a girlish form, misery in the streaming eyes and dishevelled hair, and Katherine Walton threw herself upon her brother's arm, sobbing convulsively. "Hush, Kate," he whispered, in almost stern reproach. "Hush, child. Go back to your room;" and though now he enfolded his mother in the embrace of his left arm, he strove to free the right. But Katherine would not go.

And still, though here apparently was the sought-for prisoner, no man stepped forward to claim him. Officers and men, the nocturnal visitors looked blankly at one another, at the stricken group upon the threshold, and were silent. Then with sudden gesture, as though he could no longer bear the strain, the young man broke loose from Katherine's clinging arms, and, gently unclasping his mother's hands, once again addressed himself to Close:

"I say, suh, I reckon you've come for me. I'm ready to go with you at once."

And then, with wonder and relief in their faces, with sudden check to sobs and tears, mother and sister lifted up their heads and stared at the embarrassed officer. Lambert gave vent to an audible gasp of delight, for Close, turning slowly upon the silent and astonished deputy, and with a world of suppressed wrath in his deep tones, growled forth,—

"You've got no warrant for this gentleman. I never saw him before in my life, and never heard of him as being mixed up in any trouble.—This is young Mr. Walton, isn't it?" he suddenly inquired of the stranger, over whose pale face a look of bewilderment was creeping, and who for a moment seemed unable to reply. It was Madam Walton who, with quivering, ashen lips and with hope, fear, yearning, anguish in her eyes, found voice to say,—

"This is my youngest son, suh,—Floyd Walton."

"You say," she continued tremulously, "you have no warrant—no cause for his arrest. Then in God's name go, and leave us in peace. I am not well; and, on my word of honor, no other man is hidden——"

"*Mother!* Hush!"

A door hastily opened within,—the door leading to the room to the left of the entrance, the room at whose window Close and Parmelee could swear they saw the dim figure of a man peering forth as they entered the gate. A heavy footfall resounded through the hall. A light streamed forth from the opened room, and a woman's wailing, shuddering cry followed the tall powerful form that came striding to the front. With utter horror in her eyes, Mrs. Walton staggered, would have fallen, but for the clasping arm of her son, upon whose breast she now leaned, panting for breath and glaring at the new-comer, to whose side now sprang Esther, her long black hair streaming down the white wrapper in which her tall figure was enveloped,—Esther, who strove to drag the stranger back from before her mother's eyes.

"*You* here? *You?*" was Mrs. Walton's gasping cry. "And in—that room?"

"Mother!" wailed the elder daughter, throwing herself upon her knees before the fainting form,—"mother, listen.—Oh, make her hear me, Floyd!—Mother, I am Walton's wife."

But the words fell on senseless ears. The lady of Walton Hall slipped swooning, till they caught and bore her within the open doorway.

"Well," said Close, a moment later, "what do you want done with your man,—Walton Scroggs? One's enough for this night, I suppose."

"One's enough for me, as things have turned out. Now what are you going to do with the other?"

"Leave him here, with his mother, where he ought to be, of course. You've got no cause to arrest him."

"But you have, anyhow."

"*I!* What, I'd like to know?"

"Because he is a deserter from the United States Army."

XII.

The Christmas holidays were coming on at Walton Hall, where, sore stricken, its mistress lay hovering between life and death. Two weeks had passed since the eventful night of the arrests, and, though no change had come over the landscape, and days of sunshine were few and far between, some odd alterations had taken place in and around the old homestead. Of these the most remarkable was the appearance three times a day of a young officer in Yankee uniform at the family board,—a young officer who often prolonged his visit until late in the evening. Mr. Isaac Newton Lambert, though occupying his tent in camp, had become otherwise an inmate of the Walton establishment, for, unknown to the beloved invalid, her daughters were actually "taking boarders."

Another boarder, who had come and moved a modest bachelor kit

into one of the up-stairs rooms facing the east and overlooking the little camp, was Mr. Barton Potts, better known to all the inmates as "Cousin Bart." Indeed, it was due in great measure to his advice and influence that Mr. Lambert was admitted. Impoverished as were the Waltons,—in dire need, as it turned out, now that the resolute woman who so many years had managed the family affairs was stricken down, —nothing but prompt action and the helping hands of kinsfolk and friends stood between them and starvation. Squire Potts—"Old Man Potts," as he was generally called—had urged on Mrs. Walton in November the propriety of her abandoning the place entirely and taking shelter for herself and her daughters under his roof. Even though in desperate need, she had declined,—for one reason, because that would bring Esther and Walton Scroggs together again; for another, because she could not bear to think of the old home becoming the abiding-place of all the houseless, shiftless negroes in the neighborhood. She had offered the house, garden, and cotton-fields still remaining in her hands to any purchaser at almost any price; but who was there to invest in such unprofitable estate at such a time?

In the midst of these cares and troubles, which she could share with her daughters, were others which she could not. She durst not let them know on how slender a thread her life depended. That was one secret, held as yet by their old family physician and herself alone, because the knowledge of it would bring such grief to "the girls." There was another, which she prayed they might never know, because its very existence brought such grief and shame to her: Floyd, her youngest son, her darling, who had fought so bravely by his brother's side through the hottest battles of the war, had "abjured the faith of his fathers," as she bitterly expressed it,—had become intimate with the Federal officers and soldiers, instead of sticking closely to reading law in the office of her old friend Judge Summers at Quitman. And then, worse than all, she learned through his own desperate letter that he had enlisted in the cavalry. That within a week thereafter, repenting of his "mad folly," he should have deserted the service and fled the country, was in the poor stricken woman's eyes no crime whatever. That he should have enlisted, sworn to defend the flag which was to her the emblem of insolent triumph over the fallen fortunes of the land she loved, the only land she ever knew, the once happy, sunny South,—*that* was infamy.

Not until weeks after her boy had taken the step that made him a fugitive from justice did she learn, or begin to imagine, the chain of circumstances that led to it all. While occupying a desk in the office of Summers and Todd, Attorneys and Counsellors-at-Law, Floyd also occupied a seat at the table of a widowed relative who, left penniless at the close of the war, had to struggle hard to keep body and soul together. The efforts of Judge Summers had been sufficient to save the house in which she dwelt, and "taking boarders" became her vocation. But paying boarders were scarce, and even when her table was crowded with homeless people her pockets were often empty. When Sweet's squadron of the —th U. S. Cavalry marched into town and took station there, the application of some of the officers for

"rations and quarters" under her roof was coldly declined. They went to the hotel, and suffered, as they deserved, the pangs of indigestion. Later it transpired that two of them went to church, and this put an unlooked-for factor into the problem of how to treat these conquering but unpopular heroes. The Reverend Mr. Pickett, of St. Paul's, might condone his parishioners' refusal to supply them with bodily food, but it was impossible to refuse to minister to their spiritual necessities. Their religious faith was identical with that of his flock; it was in political faith that they differed. One *might* decline to sit at meat with them, but could hardly decline to sit with them at worship. They could be forbidden to eat with the elect, but the elect would not forbid them to pray. Even in the sanctuary, however, only hostile or averted looks were vouchsafed to Colonel Sweet and Captain Vinton when first they sought its doors; but in the course of a few months the women found that their soldiers—their husbands, brothers, or lovers, whom the war had spared—were actually fraternizing with the Yankee invaders, and that between those who had done hard and honest fighting on either side there was springing up firm and honest friendship. The irreconcilables were limited, apparently, to the non-combatants. When the squadron was ordered elsewhere after a six months' sojourn at Quitman, the populace was astonished to find how much the troopers were missed and really needed; for even Yankee custom had been acceptable in the stores and Yankee contributions welcome in the church. Business had brought Colonel Sweet to Summers's office, and in the course of frequent visits cordial relations were established, and Floyd Walton could hardly treat with disdain a soldier and gentleman whom his patrons welcomed, even had he long retained the disposition to do so.

The command had not been gone a week before men were unaccountably wishing it back, and when it reappeared, with certain additions, it was actually welcomed by people who would have scouted the possibility of such a thing the year before. This time Colonel Sweet announced to the rector that his wife and daughter would speedily follow, and were even then in New Orleans, awaiting his instructions to come. The hotel was no place for ladies in those rough days: the rector went to Mrs. Tower, and Mrs. Tower no longer resisted the inevitable. Floyd Walton, going to tea one hot June evening, was astonished to find himself in the presence of two ladies, one of them a pretty girl of perhaps eighteen, and to be presented to Mrs. and Miss Sweet. Within a week the young fellow was spending his evenings at the Towers', and within the month was hopelessly in love. Then came trouble. He hadn't a cent in the world. She was a soldier's daughter, and presumably poor. Whether she was poor or not, he, at least, had nothing to offer, and, having nothing, held his tongue, though he could not hold his peace. That was gone.

That was a wretched summer and autumn. The fever raged along the Gulf, and cholera swooped upon the garrison. Sweet got his wife and child away to the mountains. They left suddenly, while Floyd was on a brief visit to his mother and sisters. It was December when they came back. Meantime, Judge Summers had abandoned

practice and gone to live at his old home at Sandbrook. Mr. Todd could offer young Walton no help; there was no money in law business just then. Matters at Tugaloo were going from bad to worse, and Walton found himself absolutely without money to pay his board. That made no difference to Mrs. Tower. She told him his mother's boy was as welcome as her own, and *made* him welcome where fascination all too strong already held him. Something in Jennie Sweet's gentle manner had changed. She was nervous, ill at ease, and sought to avoid him. Something in her mother's manner, too, was very different. And one day the truth came out. The frequency with which letters began chasing one another from the North explained the whole thing. Jenny had met her fate that fatal summer among the Virginia mountains, and was engaged to be married. Mrs. Sweet referred to the happy man as "a wealthy gentleman from Philadelphia, a few years older than Genevieve, but a most charming person." Genevieve herself said little or nothing, but looked none too radiant. Colonel Sweet said less, but looked much at her.

Then Floyd Walton found another boarding-place, and one where the influences were worse. He threw up his position in the law-office and took a humble clerkship at a store. It paid him enough to board and lodge him, and here, from serving his customers with drink, he got to serving himself, and to associating with a reckless set, some young townsmen, some soldiers. There were stories of gambling and quarrel even before Colonel Sweet found that Jenny, the apple of his eye, was drooping in that Southern climate, and sent her, with her mother, North "for good." The next thing heard of Floyd Walton was that he had gone to New Orleans with a discharged soldier; and, even while grieving over her boy's infrequent letters and evident hopelessness and depression, Mrs. Walton received a missive one day that left her prostrate. She went alone to Quitman as soon as able to move, and came back within forty-eight hours looking years older, and both the girls soon knew that she had parted with the diamond ear-rings that were their father's last gift to her in the happy, prosperous days that preceded the war. Floyd had written that, starving, drunk or drugged, and desperate, he had been led by his associate before a recruiting officer, had been sent with others as reckless as himself to sober up at the quarters of a cavalry command near the city, and that, the next thing he knew, he with a squad of seven recruits was on his way to join a troop stationed within a few miles of his home, instead, as he had been assured would be the case, of being sent to the Fourth Cavalry on frontier duty against the Indians in Texas. "They broke their contract," he said, "and I broke mine." He had deserted, and, if captured, would be sent to hard labor at Baton Rouge Penitentiary or to the Dry Tortugas.

Such stories leak out despite every effort to conceal them, but not until just before Lambert's coming to join Company "G" did Mrs. Walton dream that Esther knew of her brother's peril. A sudden outcry in her garden one day brought her in haste to the spot, and there were a drunken soldier and her quadroon maid Elinor,—he demanding liquor and she the return of a pitcher which he had evidently

snatched from her hand. Madam Walton's stately presence and her imperious order that he leave the premises at once only partially sobered him. He gave her to understand that if she reported him he could bring shame upon her head,—he knew more about her affairs than she dreamed. His insolence tried her temper, but could not alter her tone and bearing. It was not until he was gone that Esther, trembling and in tears, came and begged her to lodge no complaint against the man, as he indeed knew more than she supposed. And then, in reply to her mother's demand, Esther brokenly admitted that she had already heard of Floyd's enlistment and desertion through this very soldier. He had been at the house before. What she did not tell her mother was that the news first reached her through Walton Scroggs.

And then, without warning, Floyd suddenly came home. So troubled had he been by the condition of his mother's health and affairs as confided in Esther's letters (sent under cover to an old family friend now serving as a surgeon in the Juarez army) that, having earned a little money in Vera Cruz, he hastened back and appeared there late at evening, worn and weary, before those loving yet terrified eyes. He had ridden miles on horseback that day, as he feared recognition by officers or soldiers still at Quitman if he came by rail that way, or by Federal deputies if he came the other. Esther alone had received him on his arrival, for she, poor girl, was watching at the old arbor near the south fence for the coming of her lover-husband, that day released from the clutches of the law. Then, after hearing her recital of their needs and sorrows, he had sent old Rasmus with a message into camp, while she had gone to prepare her mother for his coming.

Late that night Mrs. Walton, kneeling by the bedside of her sleeping boy, became suddenly aware of a scuffle going on underneath the window, and, noiselessly descending the stairs, unfastened the side door and came at once upon the intruders, with the result already known. Not until aroused by the screams of Elinor and his sister Kate did Floyd know anything of the affair. Half asleep, and bewildered, he had jumped into boots and trousers and rushed to the rescue. One glance explained the whole thing, but it was Esther who in desperation seized and held him back when he would have sprung to release his mother from Riggs's drunken grasp,—Esther who, hearing the coming rush of Lambert's footsteps, realized that what meant instant rescue for her mother meant equally instant peril for him,—Esther who actually ordered his hurried retreat at Lambert's appearance. Not until the following day did it occur to her mother to ask how it was or why it was that she was up and dressed at that hour of the night. At any other time, perhaps, she would have found it far more difficult to frame plausible excuse, but almost anything would answer now. For hours she had been listening for the tap upon her window that should tell her Walton had not been spirited away to a place of safety until he had come to bless and comfort her with his love-words and caresses. To her, at least, despite the wild oats of his earlier days, her cousin-husband was all that was true and tender and fond. For him she had dared her mother's wrath, her younger sister's indignation,

and Floyd alone was her supporter in the secret marriage that took place during her brief visit to the Claytons in the early spring.

With the dawn of Sunday, his signal at last was heard, and she stole out to meet him,—to tell of Floyd's return, and to plan with him for their joint escape, for Floyd had told her that it would be folly to attempt to remain in hiding there. Already certain negroes of the neighborhood had seen him, and it could not be long before the military authorities were informed. Walton was all helpfulness and sympathy. His brother, the conductor, had planned to send his horse to the Walton barn at ten that night, and "Wal" was to ride 'cross country to a friend's in Barksdale County, leave the horse there, and be at the point where the railway crossed the county road at eleven-thirty, when the "Owl" would stop and take him on the baggage-car, —unless some of Parmelee's spies or deputies were aboard. There would be no trouble at the capital, where the Owl often waited an hour for the express. The engineer would slow up just east of town. Walton could drop off in the darkness and make his way around to the west side by a brisk tramp of a couple of miles, and there be taken on again about one-thirty A.M. and jostled away to the river. Once there, all the sheriff's posses in the South couldn't find him. Walton promptly urged that Floyd go with him. Rasmus was routed out from slumber in the barn and sent away with messages for Colonel Scroggs and "Cousin Bart," and then the voice of Kate was heard, calling for her sister. Instead of being asleep, as they hoped, Mrs. Walton was painfully awake and planning a diplomatic letter to be sent to Captain Close. For hours the only refuge they could offer Esther's husband was the cellar, for Mrs. Walton had insisted on being up and dressed to meet Cousin Bart, whom now she desired to send for and consult.

The letter which had so bewildered the company commander was brief enough. It bore neither date nor place, but went straight to business:

"Mrs. Walton presents her compliments to the officer in command of the Federal troops here in camp, and begs to say that she finds upon investigation that the two soldiers who visited her premises last night did so at the request of a member of her household, who sought their aid in bringing certain supplies from town when her servants proved too ungrateful to be relied upon. Mrs. Walton deeply regrets that the soldiers referred to are now in danger of further punishment, and, while utterly disapproving the action which led to their employment in violation of her express orders, she nevertheless accepts the entire responsibility, and begs that no further steps may be taken against them, as she will not only positively refuse to appear as a witness in the case, but will prohibit any of her household from so appearing.

"Sunday morning."

And very possibly the lady of Walton Hall felt quite assured that her mandate would overrule any subpœna the Federal authority could draft. One thing is certain, when Close read it over a second time he

handed it to Lambert, saying, "So far as I'm concerned, that blessed old lady shan't have any trouble on account of them two scallawags. She's got too much of her own. Unless you want to make an example of Riggs, you can release him in the morning. Murphy ought to be let off anyhow."

But when morning came it was found that Riggs had released himself. How he managed to cut his way out of that guard-tent without disturbing anybody, no one could explain. He was gone at daybreak, leaving not a trace behind.

XIII.

Confined to her bed and room as was Madam Walton, and only vaguely alive to what might be going on in the household,—for there were days when she lay dull and apathetic, yet mercifully spared from suffering,—it was Esther's duty and fondest care to minister to her mother's needs even at a time when her heart was torn with anxiety on account of her husband, now a prisoner in the hands of the United States marshal at the capital, and of her brother, who, under the orders of the general in command of the department, had been sent under guard to New Orleans, there to await his trial by court-martial for the crime of desertion. The visits of the old family physician were frequent, for the invalid had had too much to suffer and seemed incapable of further struggle. Floyd was twice permitted to visit his mother during the two days that elapsed before telegraphic orders came in his case. She knew him, clung to him, yet seemed unable to realize that he was going from her. She once or twice asked if Judge Summers had been heard from, for Cousin Bart had written full details of Floyd's trouble, and the family united in urging him to make an appeal to certain influential friends of the *ante bellum* days, who had scandalized the Waltons by their loyalty to the old flag. Then Lambert wrote a letter which Close signed and sent to department headquarters, and the boy, remembering some kind words said to him by his father's old friend, ventured on a personal letter to the general himself, pleading Walton's cause and portraying the family's distress. It was this letter that overcame Esther's objection to the advice of Mr. Potts to the effect that they take Mr. Lambert in as a day boarder. And within forty-eight hours of his initial appearance at their table Mrs. Scroggs, as he was the first to address his blushing hostess, was more than reconciled to the step.

But if she was, Miss Kate was not. The wrath and indignation of that young lady can hardly be described. It was one thing, she declared, for her to sell eggs and butter to a gentleman who was a friend of Floyd's, who told her he despised his captain as much as she did, who had enlisted only because he had been promised immediate promotion to a captaincy, and who never would have done so even then, had he known that soldiers could be used to persecute the people of the South. He was only waiting for his commission to come—or his discharge—to tell Captain Close what he thought of his conduct. It

was all very well to make friends with gentlemen like Mr. Riggs, who had been dear brother Floyd's friend at Quitman before he fell in love with that horrid designing Yankee girl who had lured him on to "cohtin'" her when she was all the time engaged to that rich rag-picker—or whuteveh he might be. Mr. Riggs had behaved like a *puh*fect gentleman. (She had forgotten the little bill he had been running up and was so long vainly importuned to pay. She also attached slight importance to Barton's statement that "Brother Floyd said Riggs was a fraud and a liar, and responsible for much—though not all—of his trouble.") As between Mr. Riggs and this new Yankee lieutenant who had dared to disguise himself and seek to make her acquaintance, she had but one opinion: Riggs was driven to drink and desertion by having had to serve under such brutes. She declared she would starve rather than eat under the same roof with Lieutenant Lambert, insisted on staying in her mother's room and being served there, and was conspicuous by her absence from the table for the first forty-eight hours since Lambert's admittance, despite Esther's pleading and Barton's ridicule. "*You* may think it fine to take money from such people, Mrs. Scroggs," she declared, with high disdain; "but you never would, if Moh was well enough to know whut was going on." (*Moh* is the only alphabetical combination I can think of which even approximately represents Miss Katie's pronunciation of the term by which she was accustomed to refer to her mother.) But if Miss Kate were indignant before, she was simply furious when her married sister responded, with exasperating calm,—

"And yet *you* took Mr. Lambert's money in payment for your butter, Katesie."

"Ah *didn't!* How day-ah you say so, Esthuh? It was Mr. Riggs's."

"Floyd says it wasn't. Floyd says that man had not had a cent for three weeks. You know yourself it was Mr. Lambert there at the fence both nights, and you know why that wretch couldn't have been there."

"Ah'll wuhk every finguh to the bone, then, till it's paid back," cried Miss Walton. "An' it was mean an' contemptible an' cowuhdly in him to fawce it on me as he did,—to listen to whut wasn't meant fo' his *yuhs* at all." By his "yuhs" Miss Walton meant those organs of hearing that lay so close under the brown curls on either side of Mr. Lambert's shapely head,—ears which she could gladly have pinched, or tweaked, or even banged, in her wrath at that moment. The hard-earned, long-expected five dollars had been sent to town and expended before this sisterly conference took place, or beyond doubt Miss Katesie would have hurled it back at the donor when he came so springily up the walk that crisp December evening.

Two days later brought a long letter from Floyd, written from the barracks at New Orleans. He was not confined in the guard-house, as he had feared and expected to be. The prisoners awaiting sentence were there, but those yet to be tried were kept in an old storehouse that was not uncomfortable, and on the evening of his arrival an officer, Lieutenant Waring of the artillery, took him into a separate room,

"treated me like a perfect gentleman," wrote poor Floyd, leaving his readers to divine whether this lavish descriptive were to apply to the lieutenant or himself, listened to Floyd's story from beginning to end, and told him to keep up his spirits. "Lieutenant Lambert had written urging him to do all he could to help me, and had asked old General Ducannon to restore me to duty without trial, in view of the way I had been tricked. If he does, and will send me out against those infernal Indians in Texas, by heaven I'll show them I can fight as hard for the flag to-day as I did against it three and four years ago. All I ask is officers and gentlemen like him—or young Lambert—to serve under, and I'll *earn* my pardon."

They had been utterly blue and hopeless on Floyd's account since his transfer to New Orleans, and this letter was a revelation. Esther took it up to her mother's room and strove to make her understand its purport, "Katesie" sitting silently and, at first, scornfully by. Mrs. Walton's faculties seemed too dazed to follow, and Esther had to reiterate and explain. Then the doctor came, and the hale old gentleman's eyes filled as he read. "That young fellow is a trump," said he, referring to Lambert; and he, too, bent over the gentle invalid and whispered hope and courage. Later, when Kate was wanted, it was found she had quitted the room. Esther discovered her after considerable search, shivering in a room up stairs. She wouldn't talk, but, that evening, came to tea.

For several days Miss Kate contrived to hold aloof from the general conversation; but it was a hard fight against every natural impulse. Before the end of the week her resolution had failed her utterly, and time and again her ready tongue had challenged Lambert to debate; and now, to her chagrin, it was he who declined. When formally presented to "My sister, Miss Walton," by Mrs. Scroggs, the young gentleman had bowed very low and had striven to be civil. As they sat facing each other, and only the width of the table apart, her downcast eyes and determined silence proved embarrassing, even though long, curving, sweeping lashes and flushed cheeks appeared, perhaps, to dangerous advantage. "Aw pshaw!" said Cousin Bart that evening, as he and Lambert were smoking the pipe of peace, and the young fellow ventured a fear that he had offended the damsel in the butter business, "just you pay no attention to that child for a day or two, an' see how quick she'll come round. She just wants to be huffy. She'll be hawbly cut up when she finds you don't notice her." Potts had not a little worldly wisdom when he wasn't drinking, and since his installation as *ex-officio* head of the house he hadn't touched a drop. Lambert was beginning to like him very much, but couldn't induce him to come over to camp. "I can't stand that captain of yours," was his sole explanation.

From frigid silence on Katesie's part to occasional monosyllable and thence to brief and caustic comments on the remarks of her sister and cousin, the transition was easy; but now that Lambert addressed no remarks whatever to her, yet chatted smilingly with the others, the girl's position became exasperating. She was willing enough, at the start, to keep at wide distance, but that anybody should presume to

hold her there was a very different matter, in fact, simply intolerable. Esther noted in silent amusement how the girl began to display unaccustomed solicitude as to the fit of her gown, the effect of such poor little efforts at ornamentation as her simple store of lace or ribbon afforded. Such quaint, old-fashioned bows and flounces as came forth, such queer combinations of shade and color! Esther caught her more than once glancing up shyly from under the long lashes and looking furtively at her *vis-à-vis*, for Lambert, with malice prepense and aforethought, began telling Mrs. Scroggs of the belles and beauties of last summer at the Point, and one evening when the verbal blockade had lasted perhaps three days he turned to Esther as they were rising from the table,—and if it wasn't taking a mean advantage of a defenceless foe, what would be?

"I brought over these two to show you, Mrs. Scroggs," said he, producing some carte-de-visite photographs from an envelope. "This is Miss Fordham, who was considered the prettiest girl at Cozzens's this year, though that fashionable street suit is perhaps less becoming to her than evening dress. And this is Miss Torrance. I think I told you that our ladies are no longer wearing crinoline, and that these short dresses are worn even for calling in the daytime."

And Katie Walton was halted at the threshold as she would have left the room. What woman could resist a peep at these pictures of reigning belles garbed in the height of the fashion of the day,—a fashion these fair Southern sisters had never seen, and had only vaguely heard of! Cousin Bart could have laughed outright when he caught a glimpse of Katesie's face, but mercifully refrained. She flushed, stopped, bit her lip, turned and fairly ran up-stairs, but came down five minutes later, as Lambert knew she would, "looking for a book;" and Esther, yearning over her, called her sister to her side. Looking at Northern girls' pictures wasn't making friends with their friends, anyhow! "Ah don't see anything pretty in that one," was Katesie's prompt comment. "And Ah couldn't be hi-uhd to weah a gown like that." But Lambert felt that he had won the day, and the next evening fetched over a whole album-full. "*Ce n'est que le premier pas,*" etc. Miss Walton, having looked at two, concluded she might as well see the others, but she never meant to ask questions about them—as she had to when Esther went in to see what Moh would like for her tea. Cousin Bart had brought in a bag of plump and tempting "partridges" that evening, and it was beginning to puzzle Esther very much, when she remembered how impecunious a person Bart had ever been, to account for the supplies which he began to fetch from town.

And so things were going a trifle better at the old homestead towards the end of December. Hopeful letters came from Walton. The Parmelee party were having difficulty in getting reliable evidence against him; his friends were making him entirely comfortable in his confinement, and his lawyer assured him that his release would be effected in a very few days. Floyd wrote that an aide-de-camp of the general commanding had come with Lieutenant Waring to see him, and to say that his case was being investigated and that, as yet, no charges had been preferred by the commander of his troop. Little delicacies and

luxuries in the way of tea, jellies, preserves, and wine—things to which they had been strangers since early in the war—were finding their way in and greatly comforting the invalid mother, and, could their doctor but say the dear lady was really mending, the girls would have had hope and courage, but the doctor *could* not say.

"I've got to go to Quitman for two days on business, Esther," said Cousin Bart one keen morning, "and I reckon I'll ask Dr. Falconer to come back with me, 'f you don't mind, and have a day at the birds. They'll all be gone in a week 'f this weather keeps on."

"You have deeper reason than that, Barton. I saw you with Dr. Coleman when he went out last night. It's a consultation, is it not?"

"Why, of co'se I want Coleman to have a chance to talk it over with Falconer, and *he'd* like it, too. Falconer's more up to date, the old man says, and he thinks perhaps the new school knows something wuth tryin'. You see, Cousin Lou ain't pickin' up fast as she ought to."

"I see it all too plainly, Bart. What I don't see is where all the money is to come from to pay for doctors and consultations and—and——" Big tears began welling in her soft, sad eyes. "Bart, where does it all come from now? How do we get all these dainties? *You* can't spare it. It *mustn't* be Mr. Lambert's——"

"Now just don't you bother 'bout that, Esther. I made a raise, I tell you. There's old Uncle Pete and that no-'count nigger Frank been owin' your mother on last year's crawp o' cawt'n all this time. I made them pony up, an' I told Hicks I'd sell out his mule an' cart 'f he didn't pay,—made him *bawwo* the money——"

"That wouldn't begin to cover the cost of what you've been having sent up from New Orleans,—the expressage even——"

"Now just don't you bawwo trouble." (One *r* in a sentence wasn't too much for Potts. When they doubled up on him he confessed judgment.) "Lambert 'tends to all that. Uncle Sam, he says, pays freight on commissary stores. Just do's I say, and we'll fetch Cousin Lou round all right yet, and find somebody to rent the old place and send yo' all down to Biloxi for the winter. But I'll tell you what I *do* think, Esther: y'ought to have Lambert over to sleep in my room while I'm gone. He'll come."

But when Lambert came to tea that night half expecting to be welcomed to Cousin Bart's place in his absence, a surprise awaited him. Esther, with joy in her eyes, blushingly told him that her husband would be with them before nine o'clock. A telegram had announced his release and speedy coming.

"There's no train over before morning, is there?" he asked.

"No—but—Mr. Scroggs took the stage at noon for Vernon, up north of here, and will get a horse there."

And, as it was evident that she looked any moment for that longed-for coming, Lambert decided to slip back to camp instead of spending an hour in chat or reading as he usually did. At this Miss Katesie's big blue-gray eyes were opened wide in surprise, then lowered in confusion, for he turned to look at her.

"Oh! Good-night, Miss Walton," he laughingly exclaimed. "I had almost hoped you would ask me to stay."

"Ah don't know wh'a Ah should," was the prompt and pouting reply. "Sister Esthuh can if she likes."

"She doesn't like, to-night—as a matter of course. I couldn't expect her to. But as your good mother is sleeping and Mrs. Scroggs will be able to leave her to welcome her husband and you will be—well—rather superfluous, I thought I might profit by the situation to the extent of having an hour's chat with you,—about your fair compatriots up North, for example."

"Ah don't know of any subject that would interest me less. And they're *not* my compatriots, as you call them," answered Miss Kate, with fire in her eyes.

"Ah, true," said Lambert, with provoking coolness, and a mischievous smile twitching the corners of his mouth: "I recall your indifference to their photographs the other evening. Will you kindly say good-night to Mrs. Scroggs for me, and tell her——"

"Ah'll tell her you were simply hateful and Ah thought you'd *never* go!"

"Well, I won't, if you think I ought to stay," said Lambert, returning smilingly to the door and proceeding to hang his forage-cap upon its accustomed peg. She promptly snatched it from his hand.

"Ah wish you and your photographs wuh freezing up Nawth, whuh you b'long, 'stead of coming down hyuh ty'annizing over people——"

"Now do you know I was wishing that too? It's so much nicer freezing up North than being frozen here; and then next week's Christmas. Oh, you don't have any mistletoe here, do you?"

"We did, before *you* all came. You Yankees ruined everything nice you didn't carry off."

"Now what am I to say, Miss Katesie? If I *don't* say you're nice you'll think I'm ungallant; and what Yankee would ever dare try to carry *you* off?"

"Lieutenant Lambert, Ah think you're simply horrid, and Ah wish you'd go, 'stead of standing there pulling your moustache in that silly way."

"Now, Miss Katesie!—the idea of your being the first girl to set her face against this struggling moustache! I never should have thought it of you. Or was it the mistletoe put you in mind——"

"*Will* you go?" she cried, with flaming cheeks and stamping foot. "How day-uh you stand there laughing at me? Oh, if I were a man——"

"If you were a man nobody would think of such a thing. As I'm one, I can't help it."

"Ah wish Ah could help you down those steps and back to camp," she retorted, trying hard to look furious.

"You could, easily, but you don't want to, or you would have given me my cap long ago."

"*Oh!*" and the jaunty *képi* went spinning into the darkness of the night, and the little lady stamped in fury at her own blunder. "*Take* your cap, and go."

"We-ll," said Lambert, with provoking coolness, "if I'm to follow

my cap it hasn't gone towards camp at all. It seems—excuse me if I come back for a light—it seems to have dropped close to that old arbor of yours among the rose-bushes, where you sit in the summer moonlit evenings. Suppose we leave it as an excuse for me to drop around next time you go there."

But now she seized a candle and went bounding down the steps. A moment's search among the bushes, and she had found it,—also him, for he calmly followed.

"There's your cap," she said, "and yawnduh's the gate!"

He looked up in affected pain and astonishment.

"Why, Miss Katesie!—I supposed you were simply acting on my suggestion, and we were going to have such a lovely time at the bower. That's why I followed."

"Oh, Ah should like to tay-uh your tongue out. You know Ah hate the very ground you stand on——"

The gloom in his face gave way instantly to radiant joy. "You do?—*really?*" he cried. "Oh, I never hoped for that! I thought you loved every inch of this ugly old State and that I never could coax you to leave it. Do you really hate it so?"

But now, fairly beside herself with vexation, the girl had turned and fled, her little feet seeming to fly up the worn old steps that groaned and creaked under any other touch. He stood gazing after her a moment, the teasing, merry smile still hovering about his lips, then picked up the cap she had hurled to earth, and walked blithely away.

Not ten yards from the gate came Corporal Cunningham on the run. Captain Close desired to see the lieutenant at once. A negro stood by the camp-fire in front of Close's tent, trembling from either fear or excitement or both, his protruding eyes fixed on the form of old Rasmus, who was eagerly jabbering to the company commander.

"Do you know anything 'bout this, lieutenant?" asked Close. "These darkies say there's been a big row over towards Vernon, and that Walton Scroggs is among the killed."

XIV.

The first Christmas a young fellow spends in the army is one he is apt to remember. What he did in years before, or of what nature were the festivities in those that followed, may, in course of time, become but vague and shadowy pictures before the mind's eye. After something like twenty years of service as a commissioned officer Mr. Lambert was heard to say that never, even when a homesick plebe at West Point, had he passed so forlorn a Christmastide as that which immediately succeeded his graduation.

The rain was beating down in sullen shower upon the bare and dripping woods and sodden fields; the roads were deep in mud; camp, of which he was once more commander, was wet and cold and cheerless; in the adjoining tent lay his senior officer groaning on a bed of pain, hands and face blistered and bandaged, hair and eyebrows gone, while over across the way a pile of scorched and blackened timbers,

a couple of brick chimneys, and the stone foundations, were all that was left of Walton Hall.

The story brought in of the big row at Vernon, though exaggerated, had been sufficiently confirmed in the course of an hour or so that wintry evening of Lambert's last visit to the homestead, to warrant his being ordered thither with half the company to "support the civil authorities in restoring peace." Close reported the situation by telegraph to department head-quarters, and the action taken by him, his despatch reaching the general commanding the next day an hour or so after that official had been ordered from Washington to send full particulars of the disturbance in his bailiwick, for the Federal officials in the South and the partisans of both sides of the political questions at issue had worked the night wires for all they were worth, and the early morning papers were lurid with details of the tragic outbreak.

It was midnight when Lambert started on his march with two excited deputy marshals for guides. Five miles out they met some horsemen convoying an old carriage containing Walton Scroggs, seriously wounded, and a doctor. With the escort Lambert held brief parley, also with the wounded man, who, though weak, was full of pluck and spirits; his sole anxiety seemed to be on the score of his wife and the shock the news would cause her. The account given the young officer of the circumstances leading up to the fracas differed radically from that with which he and his commander had thus far been favored. This was to be expected, as, up to this point, their sole informants were either negroes or a couple of whites of the Parmelee stamp. In the North, as a rule, the affair appeared to have been a wanton and unprovoked attack by Walton Scroggs and his friends upon some negroes who had been instrumental in securing his arrest,—nothing short, in fact, of a red-handed act of vengeance, as was evident from the fact that immediately on his release he and his party, armed to the teeth, had ridden over to Vernon, instead of going home, and, without warning or warrant, had begun the indiscriminate shooting down of certain unpopular whites and their luckless negro supporters.

In the South, except among certain journals published in the interest of the "radical" Republican party, the other side of the story was promptly circulated. "Captain" Scroggs and a friend, endeavoring to reach home by a circuitous route so as to avoid trouble after his release from jail, where he had been incarcerated several weeks on baseless, trumped-up charges, were set upon in the streets of Vernon by a blackguardly pack of loafers, insulted, abused, and assaulted, and finally compelled in self-defence to draw their revolvers, not, however, until they had been fired upon. One odd circumstance connected with these perennial shooting scrapes in those days was the fact that in footing up the score it was always found that five negroes to one white was about the proportion of casualties. This may have been due to the fact that the ratio of black to white in every scrimmage was about five to one, or else that the Caucasian, being cooler and long skilled in the use of arms, was more effective in close combat. At all events, when impartially investigated, it was found that this Vernon difficulty differed from its fellows in no important particular except one,—that

it "had no political significance whatever." Walton's friends, rejoicing with him in his release from durance vile, did so after the fashion of the day, and more or less bad whiskey was consumed before the stage reached Vernon,—where more friends were met, more treats exchanged, and where, as the devil of mischief would have it, he happened into the bar of the old tavern just at the moment when two or three others, all white, were happening out. One of these was an old-time admirer of Esther Walton, a man with whom Scroggs had been at odds for years. There was a jostle,—unintentional,—a sneer in the careless apology, and a rankling word or two. Peacemakers drew the principals apart. Indeed, Walton was too happy, too eager to continue his journey home and Estherwards, to care to quarrel. But his rival's heart and brain were burning; and more liquor made matters worse. The horses were being brought around from the stable with the troop of vagrant negroes loafing after, when, despite the efforts of his friends, the half-drunken man came lurching out of a neighboring saloon and with savage oaths rushed at Walton, "demanding satisfaction." Weapons were drawn and shots exchanged on the instant, and one of the scattering mob of negroes fell dead with a bullet through his heart, while for a moment Walton, with smoking pistol, stood alone looking down at his assailant writhing on the sidewalk. Friends rushed in, carried one man into the drug-store, and crowded Walton into the tavern bar. It was "fair fight." He had drawn only in self-defence. His assailant was to blame, and there was no man to suggest arrest. But he stood there pale and unnerved now, covered with sorrow at the disaster to the man who, even though no friend, was popular, well and widely known, and, according to the somewhat accessible standard of the State and day, "a perfect gentleman." It was characteristic of the time and place that nobody present happened to think of the dead negro.

Among these poor people Walton Scroggs was, perhaps deservedly, unpopular. The other man, open-handed, generous, easy-going, had won not a little of their unreasoning yet enthusiastic regard. It was while Scroggs, with two advisers, was seated, sad and trembling, in a little room of the tavern awaiting the result of the doctor's examination of his fainting foe, that a citizen came rushing in. "Scroggs, you'll have to get out of this,—quick. There was a meeting of that old Grant and Colfax Club going on up the street, and the niggers have rushed in and told 'em you killed Pete Jackson. The whole gang of 'em are coming."

Coming? They were already there. With furious yells and vengeful threats a surging crowd of negroes came tearing along the village street, stopping only a moment to verify the death of their friend, and —too late now for explanation or denial—they swarmed madly into the office, demanding Walton's body. The battle was on in an instant, a battle for life, a sixty seconds' war of races, white against black, as it had to be, since none would listen to reason, and superior nerve and aim told. Pistols and the office were emptied about the same moment, but five more darkies had gone to join Pete Jackson at the mercy-seat, and the proprietor of the Southern Star had died like the soldier

he was, defending the life of his guest. Scroggs himself, seriously wounded, was borne away on the dark Tugaloo road, and far and wide the affrighted negroes were scurrying over the country, carrying tidings of riot as they ran.

It was all a miserable blunder, but the end was not yet. Lambert and his detachment took station at Vernon, whence the negroes had fled in terror, and all warring was at an end. Such were his orders, and he had no choice; yet it would have been wiser counsel to recall him and his party within twenty-four hours. They could have done better service nearer home. How it happened none could ever surely say. Among the whites it remained for years an article of faith that desperate and determined negroes had followed Walton Scroggs to his refuge and there wreaked vengeance for the blood of their fellows. Among the negroes it has never been looked on as other than a direct manifestation of divine wrath upon their enemies and persecutors. How the house could have so suddenly burst into flame every one could theorize and no one explain; but at three o'clock in the morning the few men remaining with Captain Close in camp were startled from their sleep by the report of the sentry's musket and the yell of "Fire!" and, springing from their tents, were greeted by the sound of crackling wood-work and screams for aid and the sight of Walton Hall one glare of flame.

Some men got there quicker than others,—none were slow,—but even the foremost of the soldiers were appalled and bewildered by what they saw and heard,—Katherine Walton and the quadroon maid Elinor wringing their hands and imploring them to save the bedridden mother, while Esther was making vain effort to drag a helpless form through the blazing hall-way. It was at this juncture that Close came laboring up the path. He was slow, heavy, had a longer distance to run, and was panting hard, but he burst through the squad already scrambling up the steps, sprang through the fire-flashing portal, and with the strength of an ox heaved Walton, groaning, upon his shoulders, tumbled him out into the arms of his men, then turned on gasping Esther. "Where's your mother's room?" Almost fainting, she could only lean upon the pillar for support and point through the vista of smoke and flame. Close leaped in like a tiger, with Cunningham and Murphy at his back. An instant, and these latter reappeared, blind, staggering, their faces hidden in their hands, and burst out into the open air, stumbling heedlessly down the steps. A groan went up from the men: their captain was gone. In vain Burns and McBride strove to rush in to the rescue. Mortal man could not stand such heat. And then, in the midst of the wild wailing of the terrified and helpless women, came from around at the north side of the house an exultant cheer. Those men who had had sense enough to strive to reach the side windows were rewarded by the sudden thrusting open of the shutters and the appearance of the well-known burly form of their captain with some blanket-shrouded shape in his arms. The flames leaped forth from that very casement but a second after Close and his precious burden were lowered to the walk below.

And this was the story of a brave man's deed he heard from every

lip, said Lambert later, as he hastened back on receipt of the news; and this was the response made by the brave man himself, when his lieutenant bent over his senior's seared and bandaged face next day and tendered his soldierly congratulations. Turning slowly over on his side, Close pointed to the wreck of a pair of uniform trousers, scorched and burned in a dozen places and irretrievably ruined.

"Look," said he, mournfully. "Them was my best pants."

Then it was found that not only had the strange old fellow lost his hair and beard, and not a little of the cuticle of his face and hands, as well as those patched but precious "best pants," but that his eyesight was threatened. The good old doctor who had for so many years attended the Waltons, and who had come at once to renew his ministrations under the humble roof in town that was their temporary refuge, listened to the story of Close's heroism with quickened pulse and kindling eye. He and Mr. Barton Potts, who had hastened back from Quitman, came out to camp to see and thank the prostrate soldier, Potts being ceremonious in his expression of gratitude and admiration and most earnest in his apology for what he had said and thought of Close in the past. The doctor stayed longer by the silent sufferer's cot, carefully studying his face so far as it could be seen. Professional etiquette prevented his saying anything that might be a reflection on the treatment and practice of the "contract surgeon," yet it was plain to Lambert, and to Potts too, that he was disturbed. Close, however, seemed to think less of his own plight than of that of the Waltons, who, except the little patch of fields about the ruined homestead, had lost everything they owned in the world, and who were now in sore anxiety and distress. The terrible shock and exposure had been too much for one so fragile as the lady mother, and Mrs. Walton was sinking fast. Walton Scroggs, too, was in desperate case, though soothed by the knowledge that the cause of all the row at Vernon—that is, the human cause of it all—was already out of danger. Close begged the doctor for full particulars not only as to how they were but how they expected "to git along through the winter," and at last said he wished to speak with him alone, whereat Potts and Lambert, wondering, left the tent.

It was long before the doctor came forth, and when he did he called the young officer aside, a quiver in his voice and a queer moisture about his spectacles. "Have you no expert on the eye and ear in the army?" he asked. "The captain should have the benefit of the best advice without delay."

Lambert said he would report the matter at once to department head-quarters, and, while they were still talking, two men came riding out from town,—"old man Potts," beyond all doubt, and with him Lambert's railway friend the conductor, and these gentlemen, too, had come to "surrender." Close could have had his fill of triumph and adulation that dull December evening, had he been so minded and the doctor more complaisant; but that practitioner said that, while he was not in charge of the case, he should strenuously advise against further disturbance of the patient. When at last they were all gone and Lambert could address himself to the little packet of mail stacked up on the office desk, he was rejoicing to think how the good in his queer

comrade was winning due recognition at last. "He's a rough diamond," he said to himself, "but brave as a lion and true as steel."

And then as he opened the first letter from department head-quarters, addressed to Brevet Captain J. P. Close, First Lieutenant, —teenth Infantry, Lambert's face paled and his eyes dilated. It was a brief, curt official note directing Captain Close to turn over the command of his company and post and report in arrest to the colonel of his regiment at New Orleans, for trial. "Acknowledge receipt by telegraph."

What a Christmas greeting!

XV.

Those were the days which but foreshadowed the *lettre de cachet* episodes of the winter of 1870–71. Never an ornamental, never a social, and often an embarrassing feature of garrison life, the first lieutenant of Company "G" had been laboring under the further disadvantage of a six months' absence from the post of the regimental colors. There were many to speak against and none to speak for him. His singular habits and characteristics, the rumors in circulation with regard to his "saving" propensities when on Bureau duty, and the queer "yarns" in circulation as to his disposition of the property of the officers who had died on his hands during the fever epidemic, had all received additional impetus from the publication in Northern papers of the Parmelee side of the Tugaloo stories, and Close's name was on the regimental market at low quotation, even before the announcement of his arrest. But this was not all. For months the regimental commander had been the recipient of frequent letters from two despairing widows, relicts of the late Captain Stone and Lieutenant Tighe, which letters claimed that their husbands had died possessed of certain items of personal property—watches, jewelry, money, martial equipments, etc.—of which Captain Close had assumed charge and for only a very small portion of which had he ever rendered account. They, with other ladies of the regiment, had been sent North when it became apparent that an epidemic was probable; they had never met Captain Close, but were confident, from the unsatisfactory nature of his replies, and from all they could learn about him from the letters they received from the regiment, that he was robbing the widow and the orphan, and they appealed to the colonel for redress.

Now, old Braxton knew almost as little of Close as did they. He asked his adjutant and one or two captains what *they* thought; he had a letter written to Close telling him of these allegations and calling for his version of the matter. It did not come, and another letter—a "chaser"—was sent, demanding immediate reply, and nearly a week elapsed before reply came. Close wrote a laboring hand, and for all official matter employed the company clerk as amanuensis. This being personal, he spent hours in copying his reply. He said he was tired of answering the letters of Mesdames Stone and Tighe on this subject. He had sent them inventories of everything of which their husbands

died possessed, and had remitted every cent he had realized from the sales thereof. Only one of them had a watch. If either had ever owned diamond studs, as was alleged, he, Close, had never seen them, nor the hundreds of dollars alleged to be in their possession, nor the company fund for which Stone was accountable. In point of fact, he, Close, was compelled to say he did not believe the ladies knew what their husbands did or did not have. He was ready to make oath as to the truth of his story, and Hospital Steward Griffin and Dr. Meigs could also testify that the deceased officers had hardly any effects to speak of—could they only be found. But thereby hung a tale of further trouble. Meigs himself had died of the fever, and Griffin, after a fitful career, had been found guilty of all manner of theft and dishonesty as to hospital stores in his charge, and was himself languishing, in dishonorable discharge, a prisoner at Ship Island. Here Close thought to end it all, but the widows—sisters they were, who were born in the laundresses' quarters of old Fort Fillmore and had followed the drum all over Texas and New Mexico before the war—had wedded strapping sergeants and seen their spouses raised to the shoulder-straps in the depleted state of the regular army during the four years of volunteer supremacy—the widows were now backed by a priest and a pettifogger, and, mindful of the success achieved by such proceeding when led by a name of their own nationality, were determined to "push things." When December came, such was the accumulation of charge and specification against the absent and friendless officer that old Brax took the simplest way out of it and applied for a court-martial to try the case.

The day after Christmas, therefore, and before the official copy of the order was received at the barracks (as, oddly, often happened in those times, until the leak was discovered and duly plugged), the New Orleans evening papers contained the following interesting item:

"A general court-martial of unusual importance is to be held at the barracks, the session to commence at 10 A.M. on the 2d of January, for the trial of Brevet Captain J. P. Close of the —teenth Infantry on charges seriously reflecting upon his character as an officer and a gentleman. The detail for the court comprises officers of several other regiments, as it is conceded that there is wide-spread prejudice against the accused among his comrades in the —teenth. Even the light battery has been drawn upon in this instance, an unusual circumstance, as officers of that arm generally claim exemption from such service in view of the peculiar and engrossing nature of their battery duties. Brevet Brigadier-General Pike, of the —th Cavalry, is detailed as president, and First Lieutenant S. K. Waring, of the —— Artillery, as judge advocate of the court. The latter officer will be remembered as the hero of a remarkable adventure in connection with the recent *cause célèbre*, the Lascelles affair."

"Well, may I be kissed to death!" exclaimed Captain Lively, of the Foot, as he burst into the mess-room that evening. "Just listen to this, will you! Old Close to be tried by court-martial—with New Clothes for judge advocate!" "New Clothes," be it understood, was a name under which Mr. Waring was beginning to be known, thanks

to his unwillingness to appear a second time in any garment of the fashion of the day.

"By gad, if I were the old man I'd object to the J. A. on the ground of natural antipathy!" said Mr. Burton; and among the men present, some of whom had been the colonel's advisers in drawing up the charges, there were half a score who seemed to think that poor Close could hope for no fair play now. It was then that Major Kinsey, red-faced and impetuous, burst in with the rebuke that became a classic in the annals of the old barracks:

"Fair play be damned, and you fellows too! What fair play has the man had at *your* hands? It's my belief that he never *would* get it, but for the fact that Waring is detailed."

The sensation Kinsey's outbreak created was mild compared with that caused by Close's appearance before a grave and dignified court in the week that followed. On the principle of "a clean sweep," it had been determined to arraign him on charges covering the allegations as to his official misconduct in failing or refusing to support the Federal authorities during the late disturbances. "Might as well get rid of him for good and all," said Old Brax. And so the array of charges was long and portentous. So was the bill for transportation and *per diem* of civilian witnesses the government afterwards had to pay. So was Braxton's face when, the evidence for the prosecution exhausted without proving much of anything, the testimony for the defence began to be unfolded. It transpired that Mr. Waring had gone up to headquarters on the evening of the 1st of January and formally asked the general commanding to be relieved from duty as judge advocate and allowed to defend the accused. The general was astonished, and asked why. Then Waring laid before him piece by piece the evidence he had collected as a result of his investigation, and the chief ripped out something Old Brax and his adjutant might have been startled to hear, but, after thinking it all over, told Waring to go ahead, try the case, "exhaust the evidence," and never mind the consequences. He sent his aide-de-camp down to say to Close that any officer whose assistance he desired should be assigned as *amicus curiæ*. Close replied that he "reckoned he could git along without any amycuss curious, whatever that was,—he'd talked it over with Mr. Waring and Mr. Pierce;" and the trial went on.

Parmelee was the first witness to flatten out and go to pieces, and the *only* one who had anything but "hearsay" to offer on the score of the official neglects. The widows were the next. They began truculently and triumphantly enough, but the cross-examination reduced them to contradictions and tears. It became evident that most of Stone's company fund went North with one of them, that the alleged diamonds were paste, and that both Stone and Tighe had been gambling and drinking for months previous to their fatal seizures. It was established that, so far from having defrauded the widows of their money, the old fellow had sent them each one hundred dollars over and above the proceeds of the meagre sales, besides accounting for, as sold at fair valuation, items he never disposed of until Lambert bought them.

Then when it came to testimony as to war and other service, Close

sat there, blind, bandaged, scarred, and little Pierce, who had volunteered as "amycuss" anyhow, unrolled one letter after another and laid them on the table, and they went the rounds of the court until old Pike choked them off by saying they couldn't well attach the accused's scars and wounds to the records, any more than these letters: *he* was ready to vote, unless the gentleman himself desired to say something, —had some statement to offer. How was that, Mr. Judge Advocate? And Waring turned to Pierce, who was beginning to unroll a batch of manuscript, to which he had devoted two sleepless nights and in which he had lavished satire and sarcasm by the page upon all enemies or accusers of his client. Pierce meant it to be the sensation of the day, and the court was crowded to hear him read it, despite the significant absence of Brax and his now confounded advisers. Braxton already was in deep distress, the victim of overweening confidence in the statements of his associates. "Upon my soul, general," he had said to Pike, "the result of this trial already makes me feel as though I, not Close, were the criminal." And Pierce fully meant to "show up" the scandal-mongers in the case, placing the blame on them and not their colonel.

But it was not to be. Old Close put forth a bandaged hand and restrained him. "I've been thinking that all over," he said, "and I'll just say a word instid." With that he slowly found his feet and the green patch over his eyes was brought to bear on the court. The silence of midnight fell on the crowded room, as, leaning on the back of his chair, the accused stood revealed in the worn old single-breasted coat, the coarse trousers and shoes, so long associated with him. He cleared his throat and then faltered. He did not know how to begin. At last the words came—slowly, and with many a hitch and stumble:

"You see, it's this way, General Pike and gentlemen of the court. I never knew anything about what was expected of a regular officer, 'r I wouldn't have tried it. All I knew was what I'd seen durin' the war, when they didn't seem to be so different from the rest of us. I was bred on the farm; never had no education; had to work like a horse ever since I was weaned, almost, not only for my own livin', but—but there was the mother, and, as I grew up, the hull care of the farm fell on me, for my father never was strong, and he broke down entirely. When he died there warn't nothing left but a mortgage. There was the mother and four kids to be fed on that. For twenty years, from boy to man, there never was a time a copper didn't look as big as a cart-wheel to me; and when a man's been brought up that way he don't outgrow it all of a sudden. I've built the mother a home of her own, and paid off the mortgage and stocked the farm, and educated the youngsters and seen them married off, and now I 'low they'll expect me to educate the children. When a hull famb'ly grows up around one bread-winner it comes natural for the next generation to live on him too. I couldn't ha' gone to the war only Billy —he's the next boy—was big enough to take care o' things once the mortgage was paid, and afterwards I jined the army—the riggle-ers—because it looked to me like they got bigger pay for less work than any trade I ever heard of out *our* way. I'm sorry I did it, 'cause so long's there's no more fightin' I seem to be in the way; but I don't

want to quit,"—and here the rugged old fellow seemed to expand by at least a foot,—"and I don't *mean* to quit except honorable. There ain't a man livin'—nor a woman either—can truthfully say I ever defrauded them of a cent."

And then Close felt for the chair from which he had unconsciously advanced, and which Pierce hastened to push forward to him, and abruptly sat down. Court adjourned *sine die* just at luncheon-time, and some of the officers of the infantry mess invited the members to come over and have a bite and a sup. They all went but Cram and Waring, Cram saying he had asked a few friends to his quarters, and Waring audibly remarking that it would take away his appetite to have to sit at meat with so and so; so and so being the officers who were mainly instrumental in working up the case against Close. The telegram sent by Mr. Newton Lambert that afternoon was on his own responsibility, because neither judge advocate nor member of the court could reveal its finding, but it bore all the weight of authority and it brought untold relief to an anxious household; not, as might be expected, to the immediate friends and relatives of the accused in the distant North, for never until days afterwards did they know anything about it, but to a little family "lately in rebellion" and holding in abhorrence Captain Close and all his kin; for the despatch was addressed to Mrs. Walton Scroggs, Pass Christian.

XVI.

The honorable acquittal of Captain Close proved, as was to be expected, a thorn in the flesh of certain of his accusers, and stirred up trouble in the gallant —teenth. This was a matter Close didn't much mind. He was granted six months' leave on surgeon's certificate of disability, which meant on full pay, and he took it very hard that some means were not devised to send him North under orders, so that he could draw mileage. He and Lambert went back to Tugaloo together and packed up, for "G" Company was ordered relieved by another, and Close was there made the happy recipient of a pass to Chicago, while the old company, after seeing their ex-commander safely aboard the sleeper, went on down the road to New Orleans and took station once more with regimental head-quarters.

Here Mr. Lambert found means of getting occasional brief leaves of absence and of employing his two or three days in visits to his erstwhile neighbors of Walton Hall, now comfortably domiciled in a picturesque but somewhat dilapidated old cottage close to the tumbling waves of the gulf. It had been the property of a near relative before the war, and was reclaimed and put in partial order for their use, apparently, through the efforts of their old physician and the energies of Mr. Barton Potts. Here the warm, soft, salty breezes seemed to bring new lease of life to the beloved invalid, though it was plain to one and all she could never be herself again. Scroggs, her kinsman son-in-law, was rapidly mending and eagerly casting about for employment. Floyd, restored to duty without trial, was serving patiently and faithfully with his regiment in Texas, bent evidently on making

good his words. The two events which seemed to bring general cheer and rejoicing to the household were those which three months before would have been promptly derided as absurd and impossible: one was the weekly letter from a trooper in the Union blue, the other a much rarer visit from a Yankee subaltern, whose profession was not to be disguised because he came in "cits." On the occasion of his first appearance in that garb Miss Walton did him the honor to say, "Ah never *did* like you, but Ah do think *those* clothes *wuhse* than the others." This was rather hard, because, as the spring came on, Lambert's lot at the barracks was not as pleasant as it might have been, and his comfort consisted in running over to see how Madam Walton was doing.

Cram and his battery, with Waring, Pierce, and all, had been ordered away, and then for the first time Lambert realized, what his regimental comrades had marked for months, that he preferred the companionship of the battery men to that of the men who wore the bugle, the badge of the infantry in those benighted days. Old Brax concluded he had had enough of garrison life, and sought a long leave. Major Minor took command of the regiment and post, and the adjutant and quartermaster took command of Major Minor. It had neither been forgiven nor forgotten by these staff officials that Lambert had been equally outspoken in defence of Close and denunciation of his accusers, and the further fact that he preferred to spend his leisure hours with his fellow-graduates of the artillery rather than his uncongenial brethren of the —teenth gave the offended ones abundant material to work on. Minor was a weakling,—a bureau officer during the war days, a man who could muster and disburse without a flaw, but never set a squadron in the field without a "fluke." Lambert was a capital drill-master and tactician, and "G" Company, under his instruction, was rapidly overhauling every other in the regiment, even those of Kinsey and Lively, the two real soldiers among the captains. Minor hated the sight of a page of tactics, and never even held dress parade. Lambert had a clear, ringing voice, and Minor couldn't make himself heard. One morning the orderly came to Lambert at company drill with "the major's compliments, and please to take Company 'G' outside the garrison, or make less noise." It was the adjutant's doing, as things turned out afterwards, but it angered Lambert against his commander. Then, when May came round and he asked for three days' leave, Minor hummed and hawed and looked at his staff officer and finally requested that it be submitted in writing; and "it" came back with a curt endorsement to the effect that Lieutenant Lambert would be expected hereafter to show more interest in matters connected with his regimental duties: the application was disapproved.

All this time he had written every few weeks to Close, and got a very nice letter in reply, written by a young fellow who announced himself as the captain's brother Wallace. The captain was getting better,—very much better,—but the eye-doctor's bill was a big one, and he thought the government ought to pay it. He had bought some land up there six years before, and, what with schools and roads and bridges, the taxes were awful. What he wouldn't mind doing would be to come back to the regiment as quartermaster; but in those days

there was no four-year limit to staff positions, and the incumbents, both adjutant and quartermaster, proposed to hang on as long as possible, and Lambert replied that he feared there would be no chance.

And then, one day, there came a telegram to the commanding officer of Company "G" at the barracks with the brief announcement that a soldier serving in the 26th Infantry under the name of Roberts had been identified by Corporal Floyd Walton, 4th Cavalry, as Private Riggs, a deserter from the —teenth. Please send charges and descriptive list. Two weeks later Lieutenant Lambert was summoned to Austin as a witness before the general court-martial appointed for his trial. The Morgan line steamer would not sail until Saturday night. There was time to run over and see if the Waltons had not something to send to their soldier boy in Texas, and Lambert sent his trunk to the Morgan wharf while the Mobile boat paddled him away through the Rigolets and out into Mississippi Sound and landed him at the familiar pier at Pass Christian just at twilight of a lovely May evening. Ten minutes' walk along the shore brought him to an enclosure wherein the moonbeams were beginning to play among the leaves of the magnolia and to throw a huge black shadow, that of the grove of live-oaks, over the veranda of an old, white-painted, Southern homestead bowered in vines and shrubbery at the end of the broad shell pathway leading from the gate. Somewhere among the foliage a mocking-bird was carolling to the rising moon, and the music of soft, girlish voices and subdued laughter came drifting out on the evening air. Lambert's heart gave a quickened throb or two as he recognized Kate Walton's unmistakable tones. He had to traverse the length of the moonlit walk. She, with her unseen friend, was in shadow, so there was no possibility of trying the effect of surprise.

"Well, whayuh'n the wide wuhld 'd *you* come from?" was her nonchalant greeting. "Ah supposed you were dayd'n buried." (There *is* no such thing as spelling that word as pronounced by the rosiest, sauciest, and possibly sweetest little mouth in creation. He could not take his eyes from it, and she knew it.)—"Miss Awgden, this is Mr. Lambert. Ah think you've heard sister Esthuh speak of him.—Ah suppose you want to go right in to see *huh*. Ah'll call huh down."

So Lambert made his bow to Miss Ogden, who had her own womanly intuitions as to the extent of his eagerness to see sister Esther, and who presently declared she had to go home, and went without much delay over the leave-taking, in spite of Katesie's voluble remonstrance and well-feigned disappointment. Miss Walton, in fact, hung on to her all the way to the gate and made every proper and apparent effort to detain her there; but a wise head had Miss Bettie Ogden: she *would* not delay. She *had* heard sister Esther talk of Mr. Lambert time and again, and had read in Katesie's significant silence or simulated scorn a whole volume of information. She went tripping lightly, laughingly away, and Katesie watched her until she was out of sight, then came dawdling slowly back. She well knew it would be unlike Esther to come down inside of twenty minutes.

Lambert was seated in the big wicker chair, amusing himself with a kitten. He did not even look up when she finally returned.

"Hasn't Esthuh come down yet? Ah told huh you wuh hyuh, ten minutes ago."

"No. Possibly she didn't understand. I didn't hear her answer. Indeed, I could hardly hear you call."

"That's because you were listening to Bettie Awgden." (Pause for reply or denial: none offered.) "*She* doesn't like Yankees any better'n I did—do."

"Then it was on my account she left so suddenly. Where does she live? I'll run and call her back and tell her—what shall I tell her?—that I only wanted to say good-by to Mrs. Scroggs?"

"You haven't said how-de-do yet."

"I haven't? How utterly stupid of me! You see, between Miss Ogden and the cat, you were so engrossed that I deferred that ceremony until you should have time to devote to me. Permit me." And, carefully depositing pussy on the chair, he quickly bent low and seized Miss Katesie's hand, which he raised towards his lips: "Miss Walton, I am *so* glad to see you again. This fortnight has seemed a year."

Indignantly she snatched her hand away.

"*Fawtnight!* It's five weeks to-day since you were hyuh." Then, suddenly conscious, "Not that *I* cay-nh."

He started up in feigned astonishment. "*Five* weeks? You amaze me! and how sweet of you to keep count!" (Something more than mere teasing and merriment now in the sparkle of his eyes and the twitching about the corners of his handsome, sensitive mouth.) "Those five weeks have been five years."

But she had sprung to the door-way, wrathful at being so artfully trapped.

"Ah *didn't* keep count. It was Moh; 'n' Ah don't cay-uh *how* long you stay away, or how soon you go. *Esthuh!* ain't you ayvuh coming down? Mr. Lambert says he's got to go."

"You haven't told me how Mrs. Walton is, and Mr. Scroggs, Miss Katesie. And how's Cousin Bart?"

"Cousin Bart's up at Quitman; so's Walton; and Moh's 'bout the same. She'll *nay*vuh be any better so long's Floyd's whuh he is —weah-ing a Yankee jacket."

"That *is* queer, isn't it? The queerest thing about it is that he's just been made corporal in the very troop he charged into at Selma. A classmate of mine is second lieutenant in the same troop, and wrote me about it."

"*Floyd* ought to be the lieutenant."

"Miss Walton, you continually surprise, and now you delight me! This is really promising! A Southern girl says her brother ought to be a Yankee officer."

But she flew at him from the door-step, her eyes flashing fire. He seized the kitten and held that struggling quadruped, paws foremost, between him and impending vengeance.

"*Oh!* Ah do despise an' hate you maw an' maw ev'y time you come. You're mean, spiteful, hateful! You know Ah nevuh meant any such thing. Ah'd *sco'n* him if he was! Ah'd tuhn mah back on him—as Ah do on you *now*, an' Ah wish it was fo'*ev*uh!"

And, suiting action to word, the tumbling, clustering ringlets which fell upon her pretty shoulders were flouted almost in his face as she whirled about and marched tragically back to the door-way.

"Well," said Lambert, mournfully, "it's an ill wind that blows nobody good. Your wish bids fair to be granted. I think I won't disturb Mrs. Scroggs to-night, and if you'll tell me where to find Miss Ogden I'll bid her come back to you, so that you can resume the fun I interrupted. Kindly say to Mrs. Scroggs that if she has anything to send to Floyd and can get it ready before ten to-morrow morning I'll be glad to take it with my baggage. The hotel porter will come for it. —Good-night, pussy. *You* don't seem to object to Yanks.—Good-by, Miss Katesie. When your wishes are so promptly granted and you so easily get rid of a fellow, you *might* shake hands with him; but pussy 'll have to do."

With that he solemnly took the kitten by a furry paw and with ludicrous gravity gave it a formal shake, then turned deliberately away. He was down the steps and crunching along the shell walk before she started from the stupor which had seized her. Then she sprang to the edge of the veranda, and he, treading lightly now and listening eagerly for the sounding of the summons for a parley, heard, as he expected, the half-tremulous, half-truculent hail,—

"*Aw*, Mist' Lambert!"

"Yes?"

"*Whuh* you going?"

"Oh, didn't I tell you? I'm ordered to Texas."

Then he listened, wickedly, maliciously, and vouchsafed no further word. For a moment not a sound came from the shaded veranda. Slowly, therefore, he turned, and, treading as though on china teacups, went on towards the gate. Did he hope she would call again? Did he know or realize the deep-rooted, stubborn pride of the Southern girl? Slowly, more slowly still, he faltered to the gate. Nearing it, still eagerly listening, he shortened step, only pretending to walk. Still no sound, no summons to return. His hand was on the latch, and there it waited, reluctant to open, but waiting was vain. He glanced back over his shoulder, and, vague and shadowy, he could just distinguish the outline of the slender form he had grown to love with such longing and tenderness and passion. It clung there motionless. At least, then, she had not turned indifferently away. But the word, the whisper he prayed for and craved to hear, and would so eagerly have obeyed, came not to recall him. Fifteen—twenty seconds he waited, then, in sudden pride, or pique, or resolution, threw open the white barrier, slammed it after him, and strode briskly away, startling the mocking-birds into sudden silence with the lively whistling of an old West Point quickstep.

But Esther, coming forth from the open door-way to greet and welcome their friend, saw the erect, soldierly figure marching off in the moonlight; saw her little sister standing as though rooted to the spot; heard the ostentatious spirit and swing and rhythm of "*Buenas noches;*" heard a faint, questioning, incredulous, tearful little voice piping "Mr. Lambert! Mr. Lambert!" and the woman had learned in that instant what the lover would have given worlds to know.

XVII.

"Lieutenant, there's no use trying. We're only twenty, and there must be two hundred of 'em. They've got that stage-load long before now, escort and all. The whole thing's over with. If there were any women 'twould be different; every man of us would go then to try to rescue them; but there were only men. I'm as sorry for Colonel Sweet as you can be, but we can get his body when the Indians have gone. We can't afford to lose any more of our people."

The speaker was the captain of a party of Texan frontiersmen,—rangers they were afterwards called, when their organization was more complete; but these were the days when the Lone Star State was uninvaded by railways and when to its very heart—far as the capital—the savage Kiowas and Comanches often raided in full force, ravaging the scattered settlements far and wide. Lieutenant Lambert, his duty finished with his testimony in the case of the deserter Riggs, had obtained permission to delay his return a few days and taken stage to Lampasas, where Floyd Walton was stationed with his troop. Lambert would not willingly return without seeing him and delivering in person the little packages so hurriedly prepared at the new home. Then, too, there was no man in the army in whom the young officer now felt so deep an interest. Was he not Katesie's brother, and might not that brother have some influence over that obdurate heart?

It was not the porter of the hotel who went for those packages. It was Lambert himself, hoping, of course, to see the young lady whom he had so successfully tormented the evening previous; but his scheme had been checkmated in most absurdly unromantic fashion. The New Orleans evening paper among its military items contained a brief paragraph to the effect that Lieutenant Lambert was ordered over to Austin as a witness before a court-martial there in session, but would return to the barracks in a week or ten days, and this paper he had been careless enough to leave on the veranda. Katesie had gone miserably to her room, Esther had lit upon the paragraph, and in ten minutes Lambert's melodramatic scheme was exploded. Never would he forget the saucy merriment in her pretty face when he appeared upon the scene that morning, hoping and expecting to find her penitent, piteous, and mutely begging to be forgiven before he went away. He had come prepared to be grave, sorrowful, dignified, and then to be disarmed by her distress, to lead her away under the magnolias to the shaded recesses of the old Southern garden, there to assure her she was pardoned, and then to tell her she was loved. A charming *château en Espagne* was that which the boy had builded; a sweet, sad, blissful, ecstatic parting was it all to be as a result of his skilful use of his "sudden orders to Texas;" but, like many another well-laid plan, it went ludicrously aglee. She was there on the veranda, romping with her kitten, when he came, and never made the faintest reference to his departure. He alluded gloomily to the fact that the boat would be along in less than an hour, and she cheerfully responded, "Yes; Ah thought Ah huhd its whistle just a moment ago," and raced pussy to the far end of the gallery. He tried other announcements with no better success, and was

bewildered and defeated and stung by her apparent heartlessness and indifference when at last he had to go, and went away miserably jealous and wretchedly in love, fairly beaten at his own game.

So gloomy and unlike himself was Lambert that the two or three classmates who happened to be at Austin were much surprised, and so absorbed was he in his own woes and pangs that not until he reached Lampasas did he learn that the soldierly-looking man who rode all the way from the capital with him was no less a person than the Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Sweet of whom he had heard so much at Tugaloo, and who, promoted to the rank of major, was now on his way to report for duty at a frontier post. The stage with the colonel rumbled away on its journey after supper. Lambert went on out to camp, only to find that Corporal Walton with four men had gone as escort to that very stage, as there were rumors that the Comanches and Lipans were on the war-path again. It might be four days before they returned. It would be two before a stage went back to Austin, and it was now nine o'clock at night.

The very next morning brought direful news. A big band of hostiles had swooped down on the stage station at the crossing of the Caliente, fifty miles to the northwest, massacred everybody, and run off the stock. The cavalry troop in camp at Lampasas was miles away by the time the tidings reached Lambert at the tavern in town. Then came worse news. A settler rode spurring in from the Concho trail to say that he had seen the Indians when they attacked the stage with overpowering numbers, and had just managed to escape with his own life. He believed that not one soul was left to tell the tale. There were many gallant spirits among the Texans of the frontier,—men who were accustomed to fight at the drop of the hat, and who, in defence of home and friends, were indomitable. Yet even these well knew the hopelessness of the situation as described. They were far too few in number to undertake the pursuit and attack of such a band as this. Moreover, their own wives and children would be left in danger were they to take the field. It was even impossible to persuade two or three of their number to ride post-haste on the trail of the cavalry, who, at the first alarm and on receipt of tidings that the Indians had ridden away eastward towards the Brazos, had taken the road for Waco at dawn in hopes of heading them off or driving them should they attack the defenceless settlements. There were, therefore, absolutely no troops to go to the rescue of the stage party, if, as seemed beyond hope, any of them were still alive, and Lambert, burning with eagerness to do something and tormented with anxiety as to the fate of "Brother Floyd," found himself helpless.

A sergeant and some semi-invalided men had been left in charge of camp, and from these he gathered a little information, but not of an enlivening nature. The nearest posts to the westward from which help might come were McKavett and Concho, each over a hundred miles away; but Concho, being on the left bank of the Colorado, and doubtless warned by this time of the Indian raid, could be sending cavalry down the valley in pursuit. It was expectation of this, probably, that started the raiders eastward towards the Brazos, where there were no

troops, and where, sweeping northward again in wide circle, they might confidently expect to get safely back to their wild fastnesses, leading the cavalry a stern chase all the way. Shrewdest tacticians of modern warfare as they are, they had indeed already divided, one party riding eastward as reported after swooping down on the Caliente station, and driving some of the stock ahead of them, for the sole purpose of drawing the Lampasas troop off in that direction, leaving the settlers along the Colorado to the mercies of the other and larger portion of the savage force. There was no use now in sending couriers after the troop. It had five hours' start. It would be evening before the fleetest horse could overtake the command. Lambert urged the sergeant to give him a horse and arms, mount three or four men, and let them go with him, if only to reconnoitre. Then some of the Texans who had no families to defend might volunteer. But the sergeant dared not take the responsibility of disregarding his instructions, and was wiser than Lambert in the wiles of Indian warfare. "I'd go myself gladly, lieutenant," he said, "but orders are orders, and a party of four or five would be surrounded and cut off and massacred before you fairly realized that an Indian was near you." Then Lambert had appealed to the Texans, and the captain had replied as above; and then, just when he was giving up in despair, a sergeant and two men, dust-covered and with horses in a lather of foam, rode furiously in from the Waco trail.

"Is it true?" cried the sergeant, as he saw the unusual gathering at camp. "We met a feller half-way over to the Brazos riding like hell, warning folks the Indians were to the north, and he said they had jumped the stage this side of Caliente. It's *true?* And you haven't done anything? Mount every sound man you've got, and give us fresh horses."

"My orders were to take care——" began his comrade.

"Damn your orders! I bring later. The old man didn't believe it, and had a sure thing ahead of him, or he'd have turned back with the hull outfit. Why, man, that stage—or what's left of it—ain't thirty miles away, an' you fellers sitting here like so many dam women!" And the trooper flung himself from saddle at the word, and then caught sight of Lambert's forage-cap and eager face.

"Get me a horse, too, sergeant; I'll go with you. I'm Lieutenant Lambert, a classmate of your second lieutenant."

"You'll go in command, sir, and we're with you,—six of us, anyhow. I've heard Corporal Walton speak of you, sir, often. How many of *you* fellers 'll go?" he demanded eagerly of the knot of Texans, while the few troopers hustled about, saddling spare horses and levying on the list of invalid mounts, too sore or feeble for a long chase, but good enough for a thirty-mile dash when it was life or death at the end of it. In an instant the whole atmosphere seemed changed, —charged with ozone, electric force, magnetism,—something,—for the snap and spirit of the new-comer flashed from man to man. Lambert, a stranger and without authority in the premises, could effect nothing; Sergeant Dolan, a war veteran, a man they all knew, and clothed with power as coming direct from that military demi-god "the captain," had a dozen men armed, equipped, in saddle and ready for business, in ten

minutes. Six were soldiers, six civilians who half laughingly ranged their raw-boned Texas ponies in line with the mounting troopers, and Dolan sung out to Lambert, who had raided his classmate's tent for extra boots and riding breeches, "We're ready, sir."

In the hot May sunshine, at high noon, they went loping northwestward over the lovely prairie, spangled with wild flowers, the Colorado twisting and turning like a silver serpent in its green bed to their left. Five miles out, a wretched, half-demented creature hailed them from a clump of willows by a little stream: "You're too late, you fellers. They ain't anything left alive from the Paloma to the Caliente, except Indians. The country's alive with them. Good-by to *your* scalps if you venture over that ridge." And he pointed to the long, low line of bluffs that spanned the horizon to the northwest. One man stopped to question, but speedily came galloping on in pursuit. "He's scared out of his wits. He can't prove what he says," was the brief report to Lambert and the sergeant, now riding side by side at the head of the little column.

Another hour, and, closer to the river, they were following the meanderings of the stage-road, and the ridge loomed higher ahead. Two more settlers had been passed; and they were exaggerative beyond any semblance of probability. The Indians numbered thousands, the dead hundreds. The stage had been warned not to push on beyond Paloma Bluffs last night, but persisted in an attempt to reach the Caliente. Colonel Sweet and party had been butchered to a man,—victims of his own rash effort to aid the poor fellows at the station, and of his criminal disregard of Texan warnings.

"We'll know the truth in an hour, lieutenant, so there's no use wasting time with those beggars. You can see the Paloma from yonder bluffs," was Dolan's only comment.

Just at one o'clock, the foaming, panting horses were reined in and the girths loosened, while Lambert, guided by the veteran Indian-fighter, crawled cautiously up the height in front of them. Half the men, dismounted, were stationed with ready rifle or carbine where they could command every approach. Who could say whether Indians were not even then lurking in every ravine? A young Texan, following the road, pushed on cautiously to the point so as to scout the trail beyond. With drooping heads and heaving flanks the motley herd were huddled in a little swale to the right of the road, their holders eagerly watching the young leader and saying few words. Warily Dolan reached and peered over the crest. They could see him pointing,—could see both him and Lambert shading their eyes with their hands and staring away into space,—could see Dolan suddenly clutch the officer's sleeve and, crouching lower, point as though to some objects far out over the slopes beyond. Then down they came, eager, elastic, with gleaming eyes and glowing faces. "Mount, men, mount! There's a fight not five miles ahead!" sang out Dolan, and, swinging into saddle, with Lambert only a length in lead, struck spurs to his horse, the whole squad clattering at their heels. Young Texas, peering around the point, heard them coming, and threw a long, lean leg over his scraggy pony. "See anything?" he hailed.

"Yes: Indians attacking something or other 'bout a mile to the north of the road: looks like a dug-out o' some kind."

"'*Tis* a dug-out, by Gawd! *I* know the place. Witherell's herd used to graze around there last year, and he and his boys built that dug-out in case they were attacked; and maybe the stage managed to get back there. Some one's alive, else the Indians wouldn't be fighting."

A cheer went up from the foremost men. After all, then, there was vestige of hope. Lambert, eager and impetuous, was spurring off to the open prairie that lay beyond a sweeping bend of the stream, but Dolan hailed him:

"Not yet, lieutenant, not yet. There's some wide arroyos out yonder. Stick to the road, sir, till we can see the hut. It's up a long shallow valley beyond that second divide. I know the place now."

"But they'll see us, sergeant," shouted Lambert, as he bent over the pommel and drove his rowels wickedly at the torn flanks of his poor brute. "I hoped to surprise them, and charge."

"Lord love you, sir, there's no surprising these beggars in broad daylight. They've been watching for some of us ever since sun-up, and they've seen us now. Lucky they haven't guns, 'cept old muzzle-loaders. They've mostly nothing but bows and lances."

The horses were panting furiously now, and some of the squad were stringing out far to the rear. Dolan, glancing back, saw two or three men vainly lashing at their exhausted mounts long musket-shot behind.

"It won't do, lieutenant: we'll have to keep together, or, first thing you know, a hull pack o' them yelping curs 'll burst out of some ravine and cut those fellows off,—kill and scalp 'em and scurry away on their fresh ponies before we could get back to help. Let 'em catch up, sir. We'll get there time enough."

And so, more slowly now, as advised by the veteran plainsman, Lambert led his party, the young Texan ranging alongside and riding on his right. He, too, wanted to charge, and again old Dolan pointed out the absurdity of it. "Their ponies are fresh and nimble. We'd never catch *them*, while they could ride around and spit us with their damned arrows. What we want is a chance with our Spencers and rifles, sir: *that's* the way to empty their saddles and stand 'em off. Look yonder, sir!"

And then, just as Dolan pointed, three mounted warriors, their war-bonnets trailing over their bounding ponies' backs,—the first hostile Indians Lambert had ever seen,—burst from their covert behind a low divide to the right and went scurrying away towards the northward hills in wide *détour* to join their comrades. The road disappeared around a gentle rise in the prairie half a mile ahead.

"Out with you, Lang and Naughton!" said the sergeant, briskly. "Go ahead to that point." And the two troopers, well knowing what was required of them, darted on without a word, Lambert and the main body following now at steady trot. Before the two thus thrown in advance had come within three hundred yards of the bend, a little jet of smoke and fire flashed out from over the ridge, followed instantly by two others; both riders swerved; one horse stumbled and went

down, his rider cleverly rolling out from among the striking, struggling hoofs. "That's the way they'd have picked *you* off, sir," shouted Dolan, as the whole party burst into a gallop and drove straight for the ridge. "We'll sweep them aside in a second."

They did not wait to be swept aside. Six or eight painted savages were spinning away over the sward by the time the troopers came laboring to the top, and others, circling, yelling, brandishing their arms, and hurling jeer and challenge over the intervening swale, were in plain view along the opposite slope not half a mile away. Beyond that lay the scene of the siege; and just over it, only a few yards away from the road, lay two bloated, stiffening objects, at sight of which every horse in the pursuing party shied and snorted. There lay, bristling with arrows, two of the stage mules. Two hundred yards farther, the smouldering remains of the stage itself, with the gashed and mutilated body of a man only a lariat's length away, greeted the eyes of Lambert and his foremost men. Here Dolan flung himself from his horse, tossed the reins to one of the men, saying, "Hold all you can. Lead 'em to the hollow yonder," and, kneeling, drove a long-range shot at some gaudily-painted warriors clustered about some object half-way up the opposite slope. A pony plunged and reared, and a yell of rage and defiance went up. Man after man, nearly all the little squad sprang to earth and opened brisk fire on every Indian within rifle-shot, and every man for himself, following the general lead of Lambert and Dolan, strode forward up the gentle ascent towards a dingy mound, half earth, half logs, about a quarter of a mile ahead of them, until Dolan shouted right and left, "Cease firing! Stop your noise! Listen!"

And, borne down the wind, faint and feeble, yet exultant, there came the sound of distant cheer, and the rescuers knew they had not risked their lives in vain.

XVIII.

One soft, warm evening in early June quite a family party had gathered on the veranda of the old white homestead at Pass Christian. The air was rich with the fragrance of jasmine and magnolia; a great bunch of roses lay on the little table beside the reclining chair, where, propped up with pillows, Mrs. Walton was placidly enjoying the beauty of the moonlit scene and rapturously contemplating the stalwart form of her soldier son. It was too much—it was too soon—to expect of a Southern woman even so customary a thing as a change of mind, when that change involved a confession of interest and pride in the army blue, but the mother did not live in all the broad and sorrowing South whose soul would not have thrilled with pride and delight, even though hidden and unconfessed, in reading the ringing words with which in general orders a great Union leader had published to his troops the story of the heroism, devotion, and soldierly skill with which Corporal Floyd Walton, Troop "X," Fourth Cavalry, had conducted the defence of the passengers on the Concho stage, saving the lives of Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Sweet, who was shot early in the

engagement, and of two civilians, and, though himself twice painfully wounded, maintaining the defence and inflicting severe loss upon an overwhelming force of hostile Indians, until finally relieved by the arrival of a detachment of troopers and volunteers successfully and gallantly led by Lieutenant I. N. Lambert, —teenth Infantry (wounded), and Sergeant Dolan, Fourth Cavalry.

Sergeant Walton, promoted within the week, had been granted a month's furlough as soon as able to travel, and with his arm in a sling had hastened homeward, where within the forty-eight hours succeeding his arrival he had time and again to tell the story of that fearful day. They had got within five miles of the Caliente before discovering that only a smouldering ruin remained of the stage station. Hearing from fleeing settlers of the raid, Colonel Sweet had decided to push forward at top speed to reinforce the little party of defenders. The driver had urged the same course, and the two civilian passengers had naturally demurred. Then, when they found it too late, they turned and strove to retrace the road to Lampasas, were headed off at dawn, but fought a way to Witherell's old dug-out, the driver and two soldiers being killed, Colonel Sweet and the corporal both shot in the attempt, and the stage abandoned and burned. And there in that stifling hole, without water for the wounded, they had fought off dash after dash of the Indians; but their ammunition was almost gone, and only two men had any fight left in them, when they heard the welcome crack of the rescuers' rifles. Even then the Indians hung about all the long afternoon and night, and Lambert got his painful wound in heading a little squad that ran the gauntlet to a neighboring spring for water for the fevered wounded. Of his own conduct Floyd had little to say ("What else did they expect of a Walton?" was his mother's comment. "Is bravery so rare an attribute in the Federal army?"), but he could not say enough about young Lambert. "We were fighting for our lives: we *had* to fight," he said; "but he risked his to fetch us water. I say *that* young fellow's a trump." And he flashed a significant glance at Katesie, for Cousin Bart, with the imbecility of manhood, had let that domestic cat out of the bag, and then, once started, had told more. Floyd Walton, under pledge of secrecy, was held a spell-bound listener to Cousin Bart the second night after his arrival, when the rest of the family had gone to bed. Bart had been celebrating his cousin's deeds and rejoicing over his return to the extent of tangling his tongue, but Floyd could not trip him on his facts: "If you don't believe me, you can ask the doctor—ask Colonel Scroggs—or Walton—he'll be hyuh to-mawwo," said his informant. "That's the kind of Yank *he* is, by Gawd, suh; an' if I thought they was maw like him you bet I'd reconstruct too. But the Lawd don't make too many like him, nor young Lambert either."

And when Floyd finally went to his room that night after the loving visit to his mother's bedside, he sat long at the open casement, gazing out on the soft, still beauty of the moonlit night, his heart touched and thrilled as it had not been for years, and his pride humbled. While he, wayward and forgetful of their needs, had left mother and sisters to struggle for themselves, and had lost himself in vain

dreaming of a sweet-faced girl who he had early enough been warned was *not* for him,—while he, reckless, selfish, and weak, had abandoned himself to drink and despair and then to the cold charity of the world, —it was an alien and an enemy, an uncouth soldier in the hated blue, who had stood between the stricken and helpless ones at home and absolute want and privation. The good angel who ministered to them in their distress, even when stipulating that they should never know whence came the needed aid, and who finally became the "purchaser" of the desolate and ruined place, thereby supplying the means to make them so content and comfortable now, was that creature of strong contrasts, Captain Close.

Not until long after midnight did Walton leave his seat by the open casement and seek his pillow; but there was another watcher whose vigil outlasted his. In the little batch of letters brought by Cousin Bart from the post-office that evening was one which bore the Austin stamp and was addressed in Lambert's hand. Reading it hurriedly, Floyd had changed color and thrust it in his pocket, Katesie watching him with furtive eyes, yet never trusting herself to question. It was Esther who eagerly demanded news of their absent friend. "Oh, yes, he's getting better," Floyd admitted, but then faltered. When was he coming? Oh, Lambert didn't say. The doctors probably wouldn't let him travel just yet. The letter was mainly about—other matters—about Colonel Sweet, who didn't seem to be doing as well as they could wish. His wife was on the way to join him. Didn't Lambert send any word or message? No. He probably wrote in a hurry. And that night Miss Katesie sat with her dimpled chin buried in her pretty round arms, gazing long out upon the flashing waters, a sad, silent, and deeply troubled girl. There was something in that letter that concerned her; and how disagreeable she had been to Lambert! and she just *knew* it! and Floyd was mean and wouldn't tell her! At least this was the burden of her song when at two o'clock in the morning she threw herself sobbing into Esther's loving arms, and Esther, soothing and smiling softly to herself, thought she could soon find means to comfort her.

That week brought other letters, and a telegram to Floyd, and he had business in New Orleans and must go over for a day. Lambert was coming on from Texas, and he'd fetch him back with him. Everybody could see he was feverishly impatient to get away, and a sad smile flickered about the mother's pale lips as she laid her hand in blessing on his head. He went by the morning boat and hastened to the levee where the steamers of the Cromwell line came in from New York. He was there hours before the Crescent came ploughing her way up the swollen and turbid river; and, before she was sighted at English Turn, who should appear but Lieutenant Waring and the general's aide-de-camp who had come to see him during his brief confinement under guard! Floyd, though in civilian dress, had promptly sprung to his feet to salute them, but they recognized him instantly, and heartily shook his hand and congratulated him on his recovery and on the honors he had won. And then it transpired that he, too, had come to see if he could be of service to Mrs. Sweet, and Waring sud-

denly bethought him of a story he had heard about the Quitman days. A fellow of infinite tact was Waring when he chose to be, and, after a few words of cordial greeting to the fair passengers, he winked at his comrade the aide-de-camp, as he said he must hasten back to battery duty. And so, even when the sergeant would have deferentially fallen to the rear, it was that distinguished non-commissioned officer who gave his arm to the younger of the two ladies in response to Waring's calm "Mr. Walton will take charge of Miss Sweet," and while the mother was led away to the waiting carriage by the staff officer, well knowing that the mother-made engagement was at an end, the daughter's little hand slipped trembling upon his arm. What happened in the elysium of that two minutes' threading of a dusty, crowded, freight-heaped wharf was not confessed by either until two long years after. The ladies went on to Galveston that night, and Walton's face was radiant when, two days later, he came back home; and then he could have hated himself for his selfishness when he saw Esther.

"Why, where's Mr. Lambert?" was her startled query, as she met him at the gate. Only the moment before as they saw the boat splashing away from the pier had Katesie, with madly beating heart, run from her side to bathe her flushed cheeks and hide in her room until she heard his voice on the veranda and the first greetings were over, and then she would summon up all her saucy spirit and go tripping down to meet him with due nonchalance and levity. She had planned it all, poor child, rehearsed the little comedy time and again, and was steeling herself to act her coquettish *rôle*, when her sister's words and Floyd's reply fell upon her astounded ears:

"He had to go straight on home. His mother's ill."

And not until then did Katesie Walton know that she, too, "had surrendered."

All things come to him—or her—who knows how to wait; even an absent lover, even the era of peace and good will between estranged and warring sections, even the end of a long story. Another year rolled by on clogging wheels and wrought many a change throughout the sunny South. A dauntless spirit had drifted from this to a better world. Reverent hands laid the wasted form of the lady mother under the grand old live-oaks close to the "shining shore," and the Walton household, grieving, yet glad that the long years of suffering were ended, gave up, against his vehement protest, the refuge which the beneficence of a stranger had afforded their beloved in her declining days. The sisters went with Scroggs to his new home in Texas, where a pioneer railway company had tendered him employment. Here Floyd could sometimes visit them, a stalwart sergeant who gratefully declined the offer of influential men to procure his discharge, saying that he meant to serve every hour of his enlistment. Here, within hail of the cavalry trumpets and sight of the national flag, there often came to spend the day a fair-faced girl, a Northern blonde the very antitype to Katesie's Southern beauty, and the blue and the gray looked love and trust when each gazed into the other's eyes, for some remarkable bond of sympathy had linked Genevieve Sweet and Kate Walton in close companionship.

Here, too, were received and answered letters increasing in frequency, and one never-to-be-forgotten day, from a far distant post, there suddenly appeared a very proper young fellow in the conventional travelling garb of the period; and presently Jenny Sweet bethought herself that important household matters had to be looked after at the garrison, and Esther had her marketing to do and must do it. "Of course Mr. Lambert will dine and take tea with us." (We dined at one and tead at six-thirty in those days in Texas.) And so there was no one left to entertain him but Katesie—and the cat; and even the cat was very much in the way—in Lambert's way, that is, for the girl had the ungracious creature in her arms, covering her with undesired caresses, the instant after Esther's departure. The porch was vine-clad, shaded and inviting, but Katesie perversely insisted on the steps and the hot morning sunshine: pussy loved the warmth and sunshine. Lambert sought to stroke and caress Sabina, since Sabina was held tight over a thumping little heart and close under rosy lips and dimpled chin and soft, flushed cheeks. His finger-tips thrilled at the delicious proximity, and Sabina magnetically perceived it and malignantly set back her ears and hissed, whereat he pinched her ears and was promptly bidden to "Go sit ovuh yawnduh 'f you cahnt leave huh yuhs alone," whereupon he transferred his attentions to Sabina's lashing tail and precipitated a row. Sabina clawed and struggled; the outraged caudal bristled like a bottle-washer; Katesie sought to soothe with more hugs and kisses and those emotional and passionate mouthings which women lavish on their feline favorites. "Oh, um Cattums!—um Kittums!—um Pussums!—um *Tweet*ums!" rapturously exclaimed Miss Walton through her close-pressed lips, as she buried her nose in the fluffy fur; and this was more than Lambert could stand. With sudden quick decision he lifted the astonished Sabina from the damsel's arms and dropped her on all-fours on the grass-plot below. Then, as quickly, he seized her mistress by her empty hands.

"Katesie, do you suppose I've waited all these weary months to see you squandering kisses on a cat? Have you no answer *now*, after all I've told you, after my coming so many hundred miles?"

Her hands were writhing about in his grasp, making every pretence, and no real effort, at getting away. "*Ah* didn't tell you to come," she finally pouted.

"It's no time for trifling, Katesie. I've loved you dearly—ever so long—ever since the first time you leaned this bonny head upon my shoulder."

"Ah didn't!—Ah *nevuh* did!"

"You did; and I've got five glossy threads of your beautiful hair to prove it."

"It was all the fault of that ho'id shoulder-strap. Ah *hate* it, and you 'h hateful fo' reminding me of it!" And still her hands kept writhing in vain, impotent pretence at struggling. He held them with scarce an effort.

"Well," said he, solemnly, "they will never vex your soft cheek again, Katesie. I have worn them for the last time."

"Yo' have?" And now the struggles seemed gradually to cease;

or their continuance became purely mechanical, and the big, deep gray eyes looked wistfully up through their long, curving lashes. "Whut —whut foh, Ah'd like to know?" She didn't quite say "*lahke.*"

"Well, several reasons have been set before me. Mother is getting on in years, and wishes I could be near her, instead of half across the continent away."

She was looking up at him very solemnly now.

"Ah nevuh could beah you in those things—cits," she said at last.

"Brava! You are mastering army vernacular already, Katesie," he answered, his eyes twinkling. "And do you think you could bear me if I continued to wear the old shoulder-straps? Ah, Katesie, it's too late. Here they are." And, transferring unresisted one snowy wrist to contact with its fellow in the grasp of his left hand, he drew forth from an inner pocket an oblong parcel in which lay the light-blue velvet straps, wound round and round with silken threads of hair. "I couldn't bear to turn them over to any one but you," he solemnly said. "They are mine no longer."

She was silent a moment. Then the deep gray eyes were again uplifted, studying with troubled gaze the soldierly, sun-tanned young face.

"Ah'd—much rather you were going to keep on weah-ing them," she said.

"But I thought you hated the very sight of them—and the uniform?"

"That was befo' Brothuh Floyd woh it."

He had repossessed himself of the little hands by this time. "Then you *do* like the army blue a little? How I wish I'd known this sooner!"

"The army isn't so bad, now that some Southern gentlemen are going back into it," she answered, airily.

"It would be still more attractive with a certain Southern girl I know in it."

"Ah don't see how that would do you any good, 'f you're going to leave it."

"Ah! It was the army I was thinking of just then,—not myself. Thank you for thinking of me, Katesie." And now his eyes were brimming over with mingled tenderness and merriment. He had raised her hands, and, placing them palm to palm, stood clasping them, their rosy finger-tips close to his lips.

"Ah didn't! Ah wasn't! Let go ma hands, Mist' Lambuht." And once again she began to writhe, simply to feel his resisting power. "*Ah* wouldn't live like some o' those women do at the foht—just like gypsies."

"No," responded Lambert, demurely. "That's what a lady friend of yours told me: she said you were only a spoiled little Southern girl, brought up without any idea of housekeeping or care and responsibility."

"*Who* dayuhd to say such spiteful things?" demanded Miss Walton, all ablaze in an instant.

"She said," calmly resumed Lambert, "that the main reason you didn't care to be a soldier's wife, probably, was that you'd always been

made a pet of and wouldn't know how to look after a brute of a husband and one room and a kitchen,—all a lieutenant's allowed, you know."

"*Who* dayuhd to say such things? It wasn't Genevieve!—Ah'd never speak——"

"Wait till I tell you the rest," pursued Lambert, calmly. "She said she really couldn't see why I wanted to marry you: you were not at all the sort of girl she'd expect a Northerner to marry."

"Ah never huhd such outrageous impudence in all ma bawn days. Who *was* it? Ah'll never speak t' you again 'f you don't tell me this instant. Ah'll never let you leave this spot till you *do* tell me."

"I'm only too glad to stay. I was afraid you might send me away anyhow, even after you found I had given up the shoulder-straps—for your sake,—since Esther told me I'd find it hard work to make you a soldier's wife."

"*Esthuh! She* said such mean things 'bout me? Oh, Ah'll pay huh off fo' that! Ah could manage just as well as she could, and keep house ev'y bit as well! Ah've been out theyh often with Jenny Sweet, and seen just how they managed. Ah'd been watching—and studying" (sob) "and now—now"—with sudden inspiration—"Ah b'lieve you're just laughing at me! Ah *hate* you moh than *evuh*, and Ah'll *nevuh* mah'y you—*nevuh*—jus' fo' leavin' the ahmy and not havin' sufficient confidence in me to think I could be a soldier's wife. Ah might have done it—Ah *would*, perhaps, if you had stayed, but—but——"

But now she was seized and strained to his heart, and the furiously blushing face was kissed again and again, though indignant tears were starting from her eyes. It was useless to struggle. She leaned there at last, passive, pouting, sobbing a little, and striving to push herself from his embrace,—but striving so feebly, so very feebly. "My own little rebel," he murmured, with his lips close pressed to her cheek, "'Esthuh' *did* tell me I'd find it hard work to win you for a soldier's wife,—did tell me you had had no care or experience in the past,—did say she thought a Northern officer would have fallen in love elsewhere; but she never said you were not fit to be a soldier's wife, and *I* never said I was going to quit being a soldier. I love it better than anything in the world—but you——"

"You *did!* You said yo'd done with the shoulder-straps fo'*evuh*!" And up flashed the indignant gray eyes again, and this brought the quivering little mouth, so red and soft and warm, too close for safety to his yearning lips. Down they swooped upon their prey. "I didn't," he whispered as he held her close. "It's the old strap—the second lieutenant's—I'll never wear again. I've won my bar now,—and my wife."

We were sitting one winter's evening nearly two years later in the Lamberts' quarters at old Fort Scott. Kinsey was there too, and Floyd Walton with his bride on their wedding tour. A blazing fire of hickory logs was snapping on the hearth, and under the soft light of the shaded lamp was Katesie, a charming picture of young wifehood, her needlework dropped in her lap, her gray eyes following every movement of her husband, who was declaiming to his guests and pacing up and down in uncontrollable excitement.

It was the January of the "Consolidation Year," when by act of Congress forty-five regiments of infantry were summarily "telescoped" into half their number, and some hundreds of officers and gentlemen who had joined the regular service at the end of the great war in the reasonable hope of attaining suitable rank before they died, found themselves suddenly bereft of all hope of promotion and doomed to remain subalterns and file-closers until they were fifty. It was the year when to provide for the superfluous officers of the consolidated regiments of foot they were crammed into every obtainable vacancy in the horse and artillery,—when incompetents were ordered before a board of examiners and given a chance to defend their commissions, while—oh, the black shame of it!—others, gallant fellows who had fought all through the war, but had been at some time or other in the past at odds, personal or official, with certain of their superiors, now, without word of warning, without opportunity of defence, without knowing who were their accusers or what the accusations, found themselves summarily dropped from the rolls and their places promptly filled. The needed reduction by fair means proving too slow, the methods of foreign despotisms were resorted to: "confidential reports" were solicited from commanding officers, some of whom, disdaining such *lettre-de-cachet* business, promptly consigned the offending document to the flames or "pigeon-holed" it without reply, while others accepted eagerly the opportunity to undermine the men whom courts had honorably acquitted. In some few instances there were gentlemen thus disposed of who never knew they had been accused of misdemeanor until, amazed, they saw their names upon the published list. Among those thus given their *congé* was Brevet Captain J. P. Close, First Lieutenant —teenth Infantry, at the moment expecting his promotion to the captaincy of Company "C". "The old man," as his soldiers called him, had returned to duty after his six months' leave, with eyesight permanently impaired, and had been received with cordial and avowed esteem by Farnham and Kinsey and with open arms by Lambert. The manly fellows in the regiment followed suit, and they had done much to rub off the uncouth edges, to polish the rough exterior, and so reveal the value of the gem within, and Close was plodding contentedly along as quartermaster of a four-company post, when the blow fell. Minor, now lieutenant-colonel, was in command of the —teenth, the old adjutant and quartermaster in command of him. There was no need of asking whence the unseen allegations came.

An ill wind it is indeed that blows nobody good. In the general "shake-up" there came a colonel to the regiment whose first official act was to accept the resignations of the two staff officers and to appoint Lambert adjutant. "I wish you had gone in for a commission," said he to Floyd, whom he had known in his sergeant days in Texas, but Floyd replied that if this treatment of Close was a specimen of army justice he reckoned railroading would suit him better. Whereupon the new colonel swore that if Close were only back again he'd make him quartermaster and let his oppressors see the other side of his story; but Close never came.

With certain other wronged and astonished men, he had gone to

Washington and pleaded his case before a most harassed and unhappy Cabinet official who was no longer able to undo the mischief, the Senate having confirmed the nominations to the vacancies thus created.

"He allowed that he guessed a few mistakes might have been made 'long of his putting too much faith in what some officers told him," wrote Close to Lambert, "but that in nine cases out of ten the thing was all right. I told him I hadn't come to talk about anybody's rights or wrongs but my own: what I wanted was the captaincy I was clean bilked out of. He said he couldn't fix that *any*how. The only thing was to take a second lieutenantcy and start back at the bottom of the ladder again. Some of them—poor fellows who'd been so long in the army they didn't know any other way of living and supporting their families—was fools enough to do it, but I'd see him dummed first, and nigh onto told him so.

"I guess I've had 'bout enough of it anyhow, Lambert. I did my best for the government in the days when if we fellows hadn't done our best there mighty soon wouldn't of been any government 'cept Jeff Davis, and if this here's a specimen of the best the government can do for a man that got plugged pretty full of lead fighting for it, why, next war that comes around I want to be a sutler and nothing else. Lucky I ain't as bad off as the rest. The boys are doing first-rate, and the girls are well hitched to very decent farmers, both of 'em, and 'bout all I've got to look after's my property. They're running two railroads through there now, and it won't be long before I can be a Senator or Secretary, if I can't be a sutler. Now I'm going back to Spirit Lake, where I'm building the prettiest home in the Hawkeye State, and it'll be all ready to welcome you and Mrs. Lambert and—well—just as soon as she feels like travelling again—and you must come and spend a long leave with me. I ain't got any children of my own, and my kindred are kind of wrapped up in theirs, and I took a shine to you the first day you set foot in that old mud-hole of a camp at Tugaloo. So don't you ever fret about the future, Lambert. You stood by me when I hadn't a friend, and—my will's all made, boy, and don't you forget it.

"Yours truly,

"J. P. Close.

"P.S. *Dam* the Cap."

THE END.

A TAME SURRENDER.

A STORY OF THE CHICAGO STRIKE.

BY

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING, U.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," "THE DESERTER," "FROM THE RANKS," "A SOLDIER'S SECRET," "SERGEANT CRŒSUS," "CAPTAIN CLOSE," ETC.

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A TAME SURRENDER.

CHAPTER I.

SHE had met him the previous summer on the Rhine, and now "if they aren't engaged they might as well be," said her friends, "for he is her shadow wherever she goes." There was something characteristically inaccurate about that statement, for Miss Allison was rather undersized in one way and oversized in another; at least that, too, is what her friends said. She was not more than five feet in height nor less than five feet in breadth "measured from tip to tip of her wings," as her brother said. Miss Allison had wings, not because she was an angel, but because it was the fashion,—wings that sprouted at her fair, plump, shapely shoulders and billowed out like balloons. Her brother Cary, above referred to, a sixteen-year-old specimen of Young American impudence and independence, said further of her, in the spring of '94, that if Floy's sleeves were only inflated with gas she could float on air as easily as she did on water, and on water Miss Allison was buoyancy personified. On water, too, and in her dainty bathing-dress, Miss Allison's wings were discarded and her true proportions more accurately defined. She was anything but slender. She was simply deliciously, exquisitely rounded *now;* but the question which so disturbed her feminine friends as to call for perennial repetition was, What *would* she be a few years hence? This, however, was a matter that seemed to give the lady in question no uneasiness whatever. Certainly it resulted in no loss of flesh. Perhaps it might have been better for her future figure if it had. With her perfect health, digestion, and disposition, there was absolutely no way of worrying off a pound or two a week. She was the soul of good nature and content. She had an indulgent father, a luxurious home, abundant wealth, an unimpeachable complexion, character, and social position. She had a swarm of enviously devoted girl friends on the one hand and selfishly devoted male admirers on the other, or on both if she chose. She was absolutely without a mean or unkind thought of anybody. She was

full of every generous impulse. She was lazy and energetic by turns, had been a romping idler in her earlier school-days, and had been polished off and finished in an expensive Eastern establishment without finishing anything herself. She had lived an almost unshadowed life, had laughed off a dozen lovers when she went abroad in '93, and had then fallen in with her fate across the water.

There was really no excuse for her falling in love with Mr. Floyd Forrest. An utter dissimilarity to her other admirers, a romantic and somewhat absurd adventure, and, above all, proximity, were what did it. He must have been over ten years her senior; she was barely twenty when they met. He was tall, slender, and strong, with deep burning brown eyes and heavy brows and lashes. She was short and plump and distractingly fair and fresh and blue-eyed,—big melting blue eyes, too, they were. His lips were well-nigh hidden by a heavy moustache; hers were well-nigh faultless in their sweet, warm, rosy curves, faultless as the white, even teeth that gleamed in her merry laughter. He was reserved and taciturn, even gloomy at times, facts which, through no fault or connivance of hers, were presently explained and only served to heighten the interest she had begun to feel in him. She was frankness, almost loquacity itself,—a girl who could no more keep a secret than she could harbor a grudge. He was studious, thoughtful, forever reading. She loved air, sunshine, action, travel, tennis, dancing, music (of the waltz variety), and, beyond her Bible and her Baedeker, read nothing at all, and not too much of them. She was with her aunt and some American friends when first she met him. It was the morning they hove in sight of England, and the steamer was pitching through a head sea. Her party were wretchedly ill; she was aggressively well. She had risen early and gone up to the promenade deck in hopes of getting the first glimpse of Bishop's Rock, and found the spray dashing high over the bows, drenching her accustomed perch on the forward deck and keeping people within-doors.

It was too early for those who had been her beaux and gallants on the swift spring run: a late session in the smoking-room the night before had kept them below. Only one man was visible at the rail under the bridge,—the tall, dark, military-looking American who seemed to divide his time between reading and tramping on the promenade deck, pacing the planks with long, swinging stride and never seeming to care for other society than his own thoughts. He was on deck and keenly enjoying the strong, salt wind and its whistling load of spray; and, clinging to the stanchions at the saloon door, wistfully did Miss Allison regard him, but only as the means to an end. She wanted to get there, and did not see a way without a helping hand, and just here old Neptune seemed to tender it. A huge, foam-crested billow came sweeping straight from the invisible shores of Albion, burst in magnificent deluge upon the port bow, lifted high in air one instant the heaving black mass of the stem, then let it down with stomach-stirring swash deep into the hollow beyond,—deep, deep into the green mountain that followed, careening the laboring steamer far over to starboard, and shooting Miss Allison, as plump and pleasing a projectile as was ever catapulted, straight from the brass-bound door-

way, across the slippery deck and into the stranger's welcoming arms. Springing suddenly back from under the bridge to avoid the coming torrent, Mr. Forrest was spun along the rail until nearly opposite the companion-way, and just in the nick of time.

"I think I'd have gone overboard if it hadn't been for you," said Miss Allison, all smiles and salt water, as she clung to the rail a moment later, while Mr. Forrest's steamer-cap, bumped off in the collision, rode helplessly astern on the crest of the hissing wave. "But I couldn't swim like your cap. Do take my Tam," she cried, tearing off her knitted head-gear and letting her soft, fair curls whip out into so many briny strings.

"I'll use this," he shouted, turning up the capote of his ulster, while the cape thrashed furiously in the wind. "Will you pardon my saying you are a trifle venturesome?"

"Oh, I love the ocean and the wind and the sea," she cried, enthusiastically. "Don't you pity people who are too ill or too lazy to get up and see this?" And she stretched forward one white, dimpled, dainty hand over the seething waters. "Dare we get over on the other side?"

"You couldn't stand there," he said, briefly, "and would be drenched if you could. Best stay here."

And stay they did until breakfast, by which time she had told him a great deal about herself and learned next to nothing about him.

"Remember," she said, "you are to give me your address, and I'm to send you a new steamer-cap to replace the one I knocked overboard." And he merely smiled, thanked her, said it was entirely unnecessary, but did not present the expected card at all. "Perhaps he hadn't any," suggested Aunt Lawrence, after they got into sheltered waters off the Start Point. "He doesn't look like a society man. There are so many of these commercial people travelling now."

"Oh, he didn't talk at all like a drummer," said Miss Allison in prompt defence of her new protector. "In fact, I don't think he talked at all."

"Not if you had first innings, Flo," drawled Master Cary, from the shelter of his steamer-rug. "He ain't a drummer, but like's not he's been one. He's an army officer. Hubbard said so." Hubbard was one of the belated admirers.

Whether soldier or not, however, Mr. Forrest did not prosecute the chance acquaintance. He lifted the successor to the shipwrecked cap on passing Miss Allison's party later in the day, but never approached them nearer, never seemed to see the invitation in Miss Allison's shining blue eyes. "Really, Cary," said she, as they neared Southampton, "you must go and get his address and the size of the steamer-cap." But Cary was the type of the traditional younger brother, a spoiled one at that, and Cary wouldn't. It was Mr. Hubbard who went on the mission and came back with the man.

"Pray don't think of getting me a cap," said Mr. Forrest, bowing and smiling rather gravely. "I'd much rather you did not. Indeed, it wouldn't find me, as I make no stay in England at all. I—I wish

you a very pleasant sojourn," he finished, somewhat abruptly, and with a comprehensive bow to the party backed away.

But just two months later they ran upon him on the Rhine. The express steamer had picked them up at Bonn and paddled them up the crowded stream to Coblentz, and there at the dock, chatting with two immensely swell Prussian officers, was Mr. Forrest.

"Here's your drummer again, Flo," said Cary, turning disdainfully from the contemplation of the battlements of Ehrenbreitstein. "Just catch on to the cut of those Dutch trousers, will you?" indicating by a nod of his sapient head the tight-fitting, creaseless garments in which were encased the martial lower limbs visible below the long, voluminous skirts of their double-breasted frock-coats. Flo gazed with frank animation in her eyes, but Forrest never saw her until after he had waved adieu to his German friends, standing in statuesque and superb precision at the salute beyond the foaming wake of the Deutscher Kaiser.

"I knew we'd see you again," said Miss Allison, smiling sunshine up into his face, "and I've brought your cap. It's in one of those trunks now," she concluded, indicating the pile of luggage on the deck abaft the wheel. Hubbard and other admirers, who had besieged her on the steamer, were no longer in attendance. In their stead was a well-groomed, sedate, prosperous-looking man referred to as "my father" when Mr. Forrest was presented a moment later, and with him, conversing eagerly and fluently in a high-pitched, querulous voice, was a younger man whose English was as pure as his accent was foreign. "Mr. Elmendorf," said Miss Allison, but she did not explain, as perhaps she might have done, "Cary's tutor." Forrest bowed civilly to both, but looked hard at the latter, and Miss Allison presently went on to explain. "Father joined us nearly a week ago. He couldn't come before. I wish I could have stayed to see the World's Fair, but auntie was so miserable the doctor said she must get away from Chicago at once, and so we had to come. Then Cary's a perfect hoodlum at home,—one scrape after another as fast as he can get in and father can get him out. They sent him with us," she continued, in the flow of her boundless confidences. "Herr Max is a very highly educated young man, but I don't think he's doing Cary any good."

That night at Mainz there was an episode. Mr. Allison senior, fatigued, had gone to bed as soon as they reached their hotel. Mrs. Lawrence,—"auntie," that is,—Miss Allison, and their maid were billeted in very comfortable rooms under Herr Schnorr's hospitable roof. Elmendorf stepped in to write letters, and Cary sneaked out for a smoke. It was after ten. The shops were closed. Cigarettes had been strictly forbidden, and the boy's small stock of contraband had been discovered and seized that morning at Bonn. Herr Max wrote *currente calamo*, and as he turned off page after page he lost all thought of his charge. Among Cary's treasured possessions was a calibre 32 Smith & Wesson, and with this pellet-propeller in his hip-pocket the boy fancied himself as dangerous as an anarchist. Twice had it been captured by paterfamilias and twice recovered, the last time at Cologne.

Carrying concealed weapons was as much against the law in Cologne as it is in Chicago, and much more of an offence, but nothing had there occurred to impel him to draw it. The boat-landing was not five hundred yards away. There under the arching lights of its beautiful bridge, sparkling with the reflection of myriad stars, silently flowed the Rhine, and there lay the Deutscher Kaiser, with her well-stocked larder and wine-room. Thither went the boy in quest of forbidden fruit. A waiter to whom he had confided his desire had promised to have the cigarettes on hand, and kept his promise. For one small package he demanded a four-mark piece,—a silver coin of about the size and rather more than the value of the American dollar. Cary responded with "What you giving us?" which the Teutonic kellner couldn't understand. The boy proffered a mark, the German equivalent for the American quarter, and sought vainly through the misty memories of his lessons for the German equivalent of "Size me up for a chump?" The waiter had friends and fellow-conspirators, the boy had none, and when a grab was made for his porte-monnaie he backed against the stone wall and whipped out his pygmy six-shooter. Miss Allison, looking out from her casement over the moonlit beauty of the scene before her, had recognized her brother's form and later his uplifted voice. She knew there was trouble, and felt that worse would follow unless prompt measures were taken. She was not dressed for promenade, being already in *peignoir*, slippers, and dishevelled hair; but the sudden sound of a shot and a scream banished her scruples. She darted into the corridor and on towards the head of the stairs just in time to collide once again with her Atlantic protector, but was not received with open arms. Forrest bade her run back to her room while he sped on to the boy. German police are slow, if sure, but the waiter's associates were quick enough. They had scattered before the police could converge, and Forrest was first at the scene. Just as he supposed, the boy had peppered himself.

It was only a flesh-wound, something to scare and distress and confine Young America to his bed for ten days, and so to be bragged about prodigiously later on. But the injury to German institutions, the affront to the majesty of German law, was not so slight. It took some days of consular and diplomatic correspondence and a week of official espionage to satisfy the local authorities that no deep-rooted conspiracy was at the bottom of this discovery of murderous weapons in the hands of the Amerikaner. In the care of the patient and in all the formalities attendant upon the case, Mr. Forrest proved of infinitely more value than the accomplished tutor. The former, an officer reared with deep regard for established law and order, accepted the situation as a fact, the laws as incontrovertible, and considered himself and friends, although involuntarily, as the offenders. The German-American scholar, on the contrary, spent fruitless hours in striving to argue the officials out of their stand and in preaching a crusade against the laws they were sworn to obey. Forrest won their regard and Elmendorf their distrust, if not disgust, and from the moment Forrest reappeared bearing the limp and lamenting Cary in his arms, Miss Allison had chosen to look upon him as in some sense the family's

good angel. They were much together for a week about young Cary's bedside, and the boy swore that if he had "a feller like him for a toot" he wouldn't mind trying to obey. Then, when Forrest had to go his way, she found that she missed him as she never before had missed mortal man. It was the first shadow on her life since her mother's death, five years before.

In September, most unexpectedly, they met him again at Geneva. Cary had been feeding the swans in the blue waters about the little isle of J. J. Rousseau, and was figuring how much he'd have to pay in costs and fines if he yielded to his consuming desire to "drop a donick" on the head of one of them that had spit at him, when Flo suddenly gasped, "Oh! there's——" and stopped short. Loungers and passers-by looked up and shrugged their Gallic shoulders and exchanged glances of commiseration at sight of a sixteen-year-old boy rushing yelling after a cab. But the boy was fleet, despite his recent flesh-wound, and presently reappeared, dragging a man by the arm, who bared his brown head and bowed low over a frankly extended hand. He looked a trifle dusty and travel-stained to Cary's critical eye, and the boy meant to comment on the foreign cut of his Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers, provided a chance were afforded him to enter a remark edgewise, but Florence, with glowing cheeks and sparkling eyes, was pouring forth a volume of welcome and explanation all in one. Forrest was on his way to the station *en route* to Montreux.

"Oh, don't go by rail! Wait and take the boat with us: it's so much lovelier!"

Over at the quay lay moored the Major Davel, and thither Forrest bade the cabman take his luggage. It was indeed lovelier,—the evening voyage up that beautiful Alp-locked lake,—and while auntie, fatigued with her day's shopping and sight-seeing, snoozed placidly in the salon, and Cary, on honor not to smoke cigarettes again until his next birthday, was puffing a Swiss "penny-grab" at the bow, Mr. Forrest and this fair, joyous girl sat and talked while the sun went down over the Jura and turned to purple and gold and crimson the dazzling summits of Mont Blanc and the far-away peaks up the valley of the Rhone. Elmendorf was enjoying a week's leave, Mr. Allison was sampling the waters at Carlsbad, and auntie and Florence had Cary on their hands. The boy adored Forrest by this time. Couldn't Forrest spend a day or two? They would take him to Chillon and up to the Rochers de Naye. *There* was a view worth seeing! "I can stand on that point up yonder," said Cary, "a mile and a quarter high, and fire a stone down the chimney of the hotel at Territet." And they did take him, for Forrest remained four days. Mr. Elmendorf wrote that, on the advice of his physician, he had asked for a week more to spend in quiet at his home in the shades of his alma mater in a placid old German town. Stopping at Berne a few hours after leaving his friends on Lac Leman, Mr. Forrest found the quaint old capital crowded. A congress of Socialists had been called, and from all over Europe the exponents of the Order were gathered, and almost the first voice to catch his ear as Forrest strolled through the throng in the open platz near the station was high-pitched,

querulous, and oddly familiar. Turning sharply, the officer came face to face with Mr. Elmendorf, still presumably recuperating in the shades of the university at Jena; and that night Mr. Elmendorf called upon him at his hotel.

"I found myself so much better," said he, "that I decided to push ahead, and, still availing myself of my leave, to stop and see some of these most interesting old Helvetic cities. My coming here to-day was fortuitous, yet possibly unfortunate. Mr. Allison has a deep-rooted prejudice against anything of this kind,—against anything, I may say, that has a tendency to improve the condition of the laboring man,—and, while I have nothing to shrink from in the matter, I prefer not to offend the sensibilities, whether right or wrong, of my employer, and therefore should, on his account, ask that you make no mention, should you write, of having seen me here." And Elmendorf waited a moment.

"I shall not be apt to write," said Forrest, coldly, after a pause.

"Well—in case you—you see any of the family again. If it's all the same to you——"

"I shall not volunteer any information, Mr. Elmendorf; but should I ever be asked the direct question, since you have nothing to shrink from in the matter, there need be, I presume, no hesitancy in my saying that I saw you here."

"Oh, not at all,—not at all," was the answer, though in tone by no means cheery or confident; and Elmendorf departed with the conviction that Forrest did not like him,—which was simply a case of reciprocity.

There was yet another meeting, as unexpected as its predecessors, between the Allisons and Mr. Forrest, and this was of all perhaps the most decisive. Forrest's leave was soon to expire He was returning from Vienna to Paris, and met Allison senior at Basle. The Bohemian waters, or the rest and regimen, or both combined, had greatly benefited the merchant. His manner was brisk and buoyant, his face shone with health and content. He was cordiality itself to the man whom he had greeted with but cool civility on the Rhine. "I feel ready for anything," said he, "and am going back at once. Cary and Elmendorf go with me, but Flo and her aunt want to stay awhile in Paris. Look them up, will you, if you go there?—Hôtel Lafond." Forrest promised. He was going to Metz and Luxembourg on the way, and purposed spending only a few days in the capital. He found the ladies packing and almost ready to start. Once again he crossed the Atlantic in Miss Allison's company, and this time, though there might have been Hubbards and other gallants aboard, she had no use for them. It was Mr. Forrest's figure her eye sought the moment she came on deck, Forrest's arm on which she leaned in the joyous, exhilarating tramps on the breezy promenade. Every woman on board except Aunt Lawrence believed her engaged to him before they were half-way over, and would have sworn to it at Sandy Hook. Anything more blissful, gladsome, confident than her manner at first could hardly be described, but when it presently began to give way to something half shy, half appealing, almost tender,—when long silences and down-

drooping lashes replaced the ceaseless prattle and frankly uplifted eyes, —then there was little room for doubt in Aunt Lawrence's mind that Flo had flung herself away.

"Well, I wash my hands of it," said the pious lady. "It was Fate and her father. He deliberately threw them together again after my warning. Now I suppose he'll have to do something for him, for if Flo loves the man she'll marry him if he hasn't a penny beyond his pay,—which he probably hasn't. There ought to be a law against such things."

But never a confession or confidence did Flo have to offer. The ladies spent a week in New York before going West. Mr. Forrest went on about his business. It was when he met them at Chicago and calmly escorted them from their state-room on the Limited to their waiting carriage that Aunt Lawrence felt the time had come for her to speak; and speak she did the moment Mr. Forrest had closed the carriage door, raised his hat, and was left behind.

"Has that young man asked you to marry him, Florence?"

And Florence burst into tears.

From having been a bitter opponent of the possibility, Mrs. Lawrence from this moment veered squarely around. A month agone she would have resented his daring to speak of such a thing. Now she raged at his daring not to. Here they were home again at Chicago, with all Florence's friends crowding about and rejoicing in her return, and here, said Aunt Lawrence, was this extraordinary young man detained on some mysterious duty on the staff of the general commanding, working in his office at the Pullman building by day and meeting Flo at dinners, dances, theatres, and operas by night, coming occasionally to the house, welcomed by her brother, the millionaire, with whom the young man often sat now and had long talks about the questions of the hour, welcomed shyly but unmistakably by Florence, adored by Cary, who took to paying long visits to the lieutenant's workshop and meeting those swells his brother officers, and looked upon with distrust only by Elmendorf and herself. Never before had the lady fancied the tutor or shown a disposition to listen to his dissertations, which were long. Now she rejoiced his soul by encouraging him. It was an easy step to discreet confidences with Forrest as the subject. Mr. Elmendorf became a seeker for truth. Other officers whom Florence met in society came to the house to call, and presently to dine. Mr. Elmendorf and his pupil were seldom absent from the table, and Mr. Elmendorf made martial acquaintances which, as a member of the Allison household, he was welcome to cultivate. One day he came in big with news, and that evening, after a long conference with Elmendorf, Mrs. Lawrence decided on another warning talk with her charming niece.

"Florence," she said, finally, "I am the last woman on earth to pry into any one else's affairs" (a conviction with regard to herself which is cherished by almost every woman), "but I have felt it my duty to learn something about Mr. Forrest's past life. I own I did object to him as a possible suitor, but better that than a man insincere in his intentions. What would you say were I to tell you what I have heard recently?"

Miss Allison turned and faced her aunt unflinchingly. "That he was engaged to Miss Hosmer,—now Mrs. Stuyvesant,—that she broke it off, and that he has never cared for any one since? I know all about it, auntie,—mainly from his own lips."

"Then all I've got to say is, you are the most extraordinary persons I ever met,—*both* of you."

CHAPTER II.

THERE are many excellent people in this bright world who, like Mrs. Lawrence, are prone to assert that all they've got to say on a given subject is so and so, and then to stultify themselves by proceeding to talk a whole torrent. Mrs. Lawrence said a great deal in the course of this initial interview, and followed it up with a very great deal more. She considered Mr. Forrest's conduct worse than incomprehensible. What business had he to tell a girl his heart was buried in the past and pay her all lover-like attentions in the present? "He hasn't," said Miss Allison, promptly and flatly. "He has simply been kind and friendly. He would have been discourteous, un-American, had he done anything less." It wasn't he who told her he never had cared or would care for any one after Miss Hosmer: Kate Lenox told her that, and so did other girls here. When, then, did Mr. Forrest inform her of his broken engagement? asked Aunt Lawrence. "On the steamer coming home," said Florence. "He couldn't help himself. I met Mrs. Stuyvesant in Washington last winter,—such a lovely woman,—and some one said she was once engaged to an army officer and it was broken off: she found she didn't love him enough to leave her luxurious home to live on the frontier among Indians. I don't know how her name came up, or what prompted me to talk as I did. I was saying that I thought her cruel, heartless, and that she should have considered all that before ever she engaged herself to him; and then he simply put up his hand, saying, 'Do not speak of it, Miss Allison: I was the man.' It fairly took my breath away," said Florence,—which her aunt could hardly believe,—"and I didn't know what to say; and then he went on quietly to speak of her in the most beautiful way, and assured me there were other and graver reasons which led to her decision, some of which, at least, he could not gainsay, and Mr. Stuyvesant's wealth and social position had very little to do with the fact of her finally marrying him, as she did, and not until several years after the engagement was broken."

Indeed, Miss Allison waxed tearfully eloquent in defence of Mr. Forrest, whom she declared high-minded and honorable and manly. He wasn't in love with her, nor she with him,—not a bit; but she honored him and respected him and liked him better than any man she knew, and papa thought him such a superior man, and Cary was devoted to him, and he had been of infinite service to them abroad, and was welcome now and should be welcome any time—any time—to their doors, and if Aunt Lawrence or anybody spoke ill of him to her she'd defend him to the bitter end, and as for hinting or insinuating

that he was trifling with her, it was simply outrageous—outrageous, and if Aunt Lawrence dared to let him suppose it was his duty to propose to her now she'd never forgive her,—never! And so Aunt Lawrence discovered that her blithe, merry, joyous niece of the years gone by had developed a fine temper of her own and a capacity for independent thought and action that was simply appalling.

Florence went dancing down into the parlor with flushed cheeks and briny, indignant eyes and the mien of an offended five-foot goddess, leaving Aunt Lawrence to the contemplation of the field of her disastrous defeat and the card of the unworthy object of their discussion:

Mr. Benton Floyd Forrest,

—th Regiment of Infantry, U.S.A.

"What on earth brings him here at this time of day?" quoth she, irate and ruffled. "For a man who is neither lover nor fiancé, he assumes the airs and, for aught I know, the rights of both. The girl is as ill-balanced as her mother." And not all women, it must be owned, think too well of an only brother's wife. "The manners of these army men are simply uncouth. Who ever heard of calls at ten A.M.?"

It was but a few minutes before Miss Allison returned. In fact, she did not return to the scene of the late struggle,—a lovely boudoir overlooking the flashing blue waters of the lake from high over the intervening boulevard. Miss Allison went direct to her own rooms on the opposite side of the broad hall-way, and not until evening was Mrs. Lawrence favored with explanation.

"Why are you not dressed?" she somewhat caustically inquired, as her niece came down arrayed for dinner.

For answer Miss Allison contemplated her pretty white arms, and took a backward and downward glance at the fall of the trailing skirt of heavy silk, then—must it be recorded?—she calmly asked, "What's the matter with this?"

"This," said Aunt Lawrence, with marked emphasis, "may do for home dinners, but won't for an opera-party. Here it is seven. You can't change your dress before eight, and you simply can't go to the Langdons' box in that."

"I'm not going to the Langdons' box."

"You were, and Mr. Forrest was to dine here and take you."

"Mr. Forrest left for the West on sudden orders at noon, and came at ten to tell me."

Mrs. Lawrence's hands and eyes went up in mad dismay. "You don't mean to tell me you've given up going because that man's ordered off? Child, child, you are simply bent on ruining yourself socially. I don't wonder people say you're daft about him."

"Who says I'm daft about him?" queried Miss Allison, flushing instantly, but looking dangerous.

"Well, not just that, perhaps," returned Mrs. Lawrence. "But that's what they will say now. Surely Mrs. Langdon could ask somebody in his place who could have escorted you,—or else I could."

"Mrs. Langdon did invite somebody else,—two somebody elses, in fact, as my letter urged her to do. Fanny Tracy was wild to go, and Captain Farwell wild to take her. I did a charitable thing in suggesting them."

"Then the result of that piece of charity will be that all Chicago will say you are so much in love with that man you couldn't go to 'Faust' when he went away."

"Chicago has too many other things to think of, and—— Where's papa?" said Miss Allison, turning abruptly from her aunt and moving with quick, impetuous step towards the heavy portière that hung between the parlor and Mr. Allison's library. But she stopped short at the threshold, for there, just within the rich folds of the hanging barrier, apparently searching for some particular book among the shelves nearest the parlor and farthest from the library lights, and humming musically to himself as he did so, was Cary's tutor.

"I did not know you were here, Mr. Elmendorf," said Miss Allison, coldly. "I supposed you were in the study with my brother."

"I was until a moment ago. We needed a book, and I came down for it."

Mr. Allison's easy-chair and reading-lamp with the evening papers were all arranged as usual, awaiting, at the other end of the room, the coming of the master of the house. It was his custom to read there some hours each evening, and the library was the one room in which he reigned supreme. His books, papers, desks, and tables were sacred to his use, and might not at any time be disturbed by other hands. Even Mrs. Lawrence, who had her own books in her own little snuggery up-stairs, rarely ventured to touch her brother's library shelves. As for Florence, she never cared to. It was well known that Mr. Elmendorf had more than once been sharply rebuked for having helped himself without first seeking the owner's permission. Yet here he was again. The odd thing about it was that this end of the library was dark. The books on these shelves were huge folios, the size of some Brobdingnagian atlas, any one of which required all Mr. Elmendorf's strength to lift from its place. Miss Allison was not over-shrewd. She was frankness, guilelessness itself. She rarely saw through the meanness of man or the duplicity of woman. This, however, was not the first, but the second or third time that Mr. Elmendorf had been revealed behind those curtains when she was in conversation in the parlor, and it dawned upon her at last that Cary's tutor

was as good a listener as talker, and there were times when Mr. Elmendorf was fluency itself. He was a shrewd fellow, too, and he read his sentence in her face.

"Miss Allison," said he, quitting his search and stepping boldly forward, "it would be idle in me to disguise that I have unwittingly heard a portion of the conversation between your aunt and yourself; and, as your brother's friend and tutor, your father's trusted adviser in many a way, both professional and personal,—indeed, if I may say so without offence, as one who would gladly be your friend,—I feel bound to support Mrs. Lawrence in the view she takes of this—pardon me—unfortunate matter."

"Mr. Elmendorf!" interrupted Miss Allison, with eyes and cheeks aflame.

"Bear with me one moment," persisted Mr. Elmendorf, with deprecatory gesture. "I am aware that I have not possessed your friendship in the past; indeed, I may say I have been conscious of a distinctly hostile influence; but my devotion to your father and your brother and the interests of the family and all that may affect its good name make it mandatory upon me to speak. I appeal to Mrs. Lawrence to support me in my assertion that I am prompted only by the worthiest motives in thus apparently intrusively, officiously if you will, claiming your attention." Mrs. Lawrence bowed grave assent. She had many a time expressed her disapprobation of Mr. Elmendorf's propensity to interfere in domestic matters wherein he had no concern, but here was a case where unlooked-for support was accorded her side of an unfinished argument. Mrs. Lawrence considered all comment of Mr. Elmendorf on her affairs as utterly unwarrantable, but poor Flo really laid herself open to criticism.

It was Miss Allison who brought matters to a climax. "I refuse to listen," said she, with something very like a stamp of her plump little foot. "Mr. Elmendorf forgets himself entirely when he attempts to—to criticise my conduct."

"Pardon me, Miss Allison, it is not your conduct, it is, on the contrary, Mr. Forrest's, that I consider deserving criticism,—more than criticism. It is of him, not of yourself, that I feel it my duty to speak. I should be disloyal to my employer, to my friends, to my own sense of honor and propriety, were I to keep silence. . I know whereof I speak when I say that he is unfit to step within these doors, to presume to address you even as an acquaintance; and if you will but listen——"

"But I won't listen. I forbid your ever daring to speak to me in any such way or on any such subject again." And, so saying, Miss Allison swept angrily from the room.

Elmendorf shrugged his shoulders. "You see," he said, in the high-pitched, querulous tone that so closely resembled a whine, "you see the hopelessness of arguing with a woman in love. I have only succeeded in making another enemy, and my position here will become all the more embarrassing."

"In so far as I can uphold you, Mr. Elmendorf," said Mrs. Lawrence, promptly, "you may count upon me. Flo is stubborn and hot-

headed. She looks upon Mr. Forrest as a hero, whereas he is really a detriment to her social future. I rejoice in his being ordered West, and hope the duty will keep him a long time away from Chicago."

"Ah! did he say he was ordered away on any special duty?" asked Mr. Elmendorf.

"I certainly so understood Florence."

Mr. Elmendorf elevated his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders anew. "That is very unlike the story that was told me at headquarters," said he, significantly.

"What was that?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, with prompt and pardonable curiosity.

"That he was ordered away—under a cloud—in order to put an end to probable scandal."

"Gambling?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, whose own first-born left college prematurely because of fatal propensities in that line.

"W-e-l-l," answered Elmendorf, pursing up his lips, "I won't say there may not have been something of that kind, but the main trouble is more serious. I speak from excellent authority in saying that the general gave him just sixteen hours in which to pack and start, fixing the noon train to-day as the limit,—very probably to prevent his seeing the—er—woman in the case again."

CHAPTER III.

Miss Allison declined to come down to dinner that night, and Mrs. Lawrence had no power to compel her attendance. What she hoped was that when Mr. Allison came in he would send his mandate; but Mr. Allison did not come. Instead there was a messenger from the club. Mr. Allison was unexpectedly detained by an important meeting of a board of directors, and might not be home until late. The butler made the announcement with his usual impassive face, and Mrs. Lawrence directed dinner served without further delay. When told to summon Master Cary, a servant presently returned with the information that that young gentleman had stepped out. "Slipped out," muttered Elmendorf between his teeth, for no sooner did Cary discover that "dad" was not to be home than he tobogganed down the baluster rail and shot forth into the surrounding darkness, and was blocks away among cronies of his own before his absence was discovered. "My brother is far too lax in his discipline with Cary," said Mrs. Lawrence, in that profound disapprobation which most people have of other people's methods, especially when their own system, or lack of it, has proved conspicuous failure.

"Mr. Allison," said Elmendorf, diplomatically, "is somewhat wedded to his theory, but that may not stand the test of practice. I had flattered myself that the few months of my tuition were beginning to bear good fruit, and that Cary was steadying, so to speak; but ever since the boy began to get this West Point idea into his head I have found him becoming more and more difficult to guide and control.

Indeed, while I do not wish to be considered as complaining, I feel bound to say, since you have done me the honor to open the subject, that the influence of Mr. Forrest upon both your nephew and your brother has been detrimental to my usefulness in this household, so much so, in fact, as to prove at times a serious embarrassment."

Now, Mrs. Lawrence had by no means "opened the subject," as intimated by Mr. Elmendorf, but he was adroit in the manipulation of language. He noted unerringly the cloud of dissent in her face, and knew it would find verbal expression provided opportunity were afforded. To head off disclaimer, therefore, he resorted to the time-honored feminine expedient of talking down the other side and giving it no chance to be heard,—an easy matter with him, for when Elmendorf got to talking there was no telling when he would stop or what he might say. He was a man who loved talk for talk's sake, who had an almost maternal fondness for the sound of his own voice, and who petted and cajoled and patted and moulded his phrases and sentences as an indulgent mother might humor a child or a school-girl dress and adorn a doll. Before he had been two months an inmate of the household, old Allison had come to wish he had not begun by prescribing that Cary and his tutor should regularly appear at the family table. Once established there, Elmendorf speedily became dominant. If friends of Miss Allison dropped in to luncheon and the chat was of social matters or other girls, if Allison brought home fellow-magnates to take pot-luck at his hospitable board, if Mrs. Lawrence and her especial cronies discoursed on that never-ending problem, the servants, if Forrest and his army friends came informally, no matter what the subject or who the speakers, Elmendorf speedily "chipped in," as Cary expressed it, and once in could not be driven out. His pet theme was the wrongs of the wage-workers, his pet theory the doctrine of incessant change. His watchword seemed to be "Whatever is is wrong," for against the existing order of things in state, society, or home he was ever ready to wage determined war. Armed with propensities such as these, a profound conviction of his own sense and sagacity and consummate distrust in those of everybody else, it is easy to see that once encouraged to break the ice and join in the current of conversation he could not readily be eliminated. A man of good education was Elmendorf, and during the European trip he had not been so much in the way, but once home again, more and more as the winter wore on did the head of the household find himself wishing he had never set eyes on the man. He heard of him presently as addressing socialistic meetings and appearing prominently at the sessions of the labor unions. Then in the columns of papers of marked anarchistic tendencies, that had been under the ban ever since the riots of '86, long articles began to appear over his initials, and both in his speeches and in his contributions Elmendorf was emphatic in his condemnation of capital, and in his demands that labor should unite, unite everywhere, and by concerted and persistent effort wring from the congested coffers of capital—Elmendorf loved alliteration—a large share of its hoarded wealth. The hands that wrought the fabric, said he, should share and share alike in every profit. The man who riveted the bolt or swung the hammer

deserved equal wage with him whose brain evolved the plan, or whose fortune built the mammoth plant and purchased the costly machinery.

"What I employed him for," said Allison, "was to prepare Cary for college, and to keep him out of mischief; but the boy's running wilder than before. Elmendorf's welcome to his theories, but not to the time they take from the education of my son." It presently transpired that many an evening when they were supposed to be in the study or at the library or the theatre, Elmendorf was off at some meeting of the laboring men, largely attended by loafers who labored not at all, and no one knew just where Cary had gone unless he chose to tell. Elmendorf had long since offended Miss Allison and her friends by intrusion in their talk; he had offended Mrs. Lawrence by comment and criticism on household affairs that were none of his business; he had annoyed Allison by persistence in taking part in the discussion when his business or professional friends happened in. He had time and again thrown down the gauntlet, so to speak, when Forrest or his comrades were present, and challenged the army men to debate as to whether there was the faintest excuse for the existence of even so small a force as ours in a land so great and free; but Forrest coolly—even courteously—refused to be drawn into controversy, and, though treating the tutor with scrupulous politeness, insisted on holding him at a distance. Naturally, therefore, Elmendorf hated the lieutenant and all who trained with him. None the less did he continue making frequent visits to the officers at head-quarters, and there the officers who met him on equal footing at Mr. Allison's table could not snub him. They grew suspicious of him, however, especially after reading his speeches, etc., which as the spring came on grew more and more significant, and so they shut up like so many clams on all professional topics whenever Elmendorf appeared.

For it was well known in the great community that "the regulars" were keeping close watch on the changing phases of what the papers termed "the situation." Twice or thrice before in the history of the city had its mobs overpowered the municipal authority and defied that of the State. Right or wrong, the majority among the prominent citizens believed that in greater force and fury than ever before the turbulent element among the people, taking advantage of some convenient strike, would break bounds once more, and nothing short of disciplined military force would down them. The State troops, vastly improved by the experiences of the past, had won their way to increased confidence and respect, but all the same people took comfort in the thought that only an hour's railway ride away there was posted a compact little body of regulars, and, despite the jealousy aroused in the heart of a free people through the existence of a standing army, it is marvellous to see how much comfort its proximity brings to law-abiding men.

Now, one of Elmendorf's theories, and one upon which he descanted by the hour, was that in the very nature of things it was impossible for people well to do in the world to sympathize with or understand the needs of those who were not so favored. Divine writ, said he, was with him. Just as impossible as for a camel to pass through the needle's eye or for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven was it that the wealthy

could feel for the poor. Opulence and indigence were no more sympathetic than oil and vinegar. The poor must ever have a champion, a savior, a mediator, or they are ground beneath a relentless heel. It was Elmendorf's belief that no manufacturer, employer, landlord, capitalist, or manager could by any possible chance deal justly with the employed. It was a conviction equally profound that manifest destiny had chosen him to be the modern Moses who was to lead his millions out of the house of bondage. It was astonishing that with purpose so high and aim so lofty he could find time and inclination to meddle with matters so far beneath him; but the trouble with Elmendorf was that he was a born meddler, and, no matter what the occasion, from a national convention to a servants' squabble, he was ever eager to serve as adviser or arbitrator. It was his proclivities in this line that brought on the first clash with Mrs. Lawrence, for in a difference between the lady of the house and the belle of the kitchen, which was, as usual, none of his affair, Elmendorf took sides with the cook. In the light of his conduct on this occasion, Mrs. Lawrence declared him a pest, and she only recanted when thus unexpectedly he arrayed himself under her own banner against her recreant niece.

And so this evening they sat alone in the stately dining-room, and Elmendorf found in Mrs. Lawrence an eager and even sympathetic listener, for just so soon as the services of the butler could be dispensed with the tutor opened fire on Forrest and his alleged iniquities, and from this as entering wedge he found it easy to favor the aunt with his views as to what should be done towards reclaiming the niece, so lamentably and notoriously infatuated.

Mrs. Lawrence winced. It is all very well for a woman to say such things herself in the heat of argument and to the object of her wrath, but quite another matter to hear them applied by somebody else, and that somebody a dependant, so to speak, in the household. Mrs. Lawrence, it may be remembered, was indignant at Forrest first because she thought he meant to offer himself to Florence, and then because she thought he didn't. She did not want Florence to marry him, but still less did she want that he should not want her. That was unbearable. She upbraided Florence for seeing so much of Forrest, because it made people think her in love with him, and she raged at the people who dared to think as she said they did. Mrs. Lawrence, therefore, may with safety be set down as somewhat inconsistent.

"I do not think my niece is at all infatuated with Mr. Forrest, Mr. Elmendorf," said she, somewhat severely. "She admires him greatly, and there happens to be no one else to occupy her thoughts just now. I beg you, therefore, to dismiss that idea at once and for all time."

"I should be glad to do so, Mrs. Lawrence," replied the tutor, with much gravity, "and could do so, perhaps, were it not that you yourself gave me, in the conversation I was so unfortunate as accidentally to overhear, the confirmation. Would it not be better now, instead of working at cross-purposes in this matter, if you were to trust me more fully and enable me to act in harmony with your plans and wishes? I shrink from intruding unasked, but, believe me, I too have heard

such talk as convinces me that it is high time Miss Allison's friends took counsel together to protect her good name."

Indignant, as most women would be, at being reminded of her own responsibility for a false impression, Mrs. Lawrence could have found it easy to put an end to the conference then and there, but for Elmendorf's adroit reference to "other talk." That piqued her curiosity and held her.

"What talk? Where?" she asked.

"I do not like to mention names, Mrs. Lawrence. My acquaintance among the officials at head-quarters has become extensive, and much is said in confidence to me that perhaps wouldn't be heard in their chat with others. Indeed, I may say that some among the more thoughtful and broad-minded of their number—there are a few such—have sought my views upon important questions of the day and have favored me with their opinions."

"And do you mean that Florence has been discussed there, among all those men,—those officers?" interrupted Mrs. Lawrence, with justifiable wrath.

Elmendorf shrugged his shoulders. "Of course I ought not to betray my hosts or give away their secrets, but do you suppose that there, any more than among the loungers of the clubs, a woman's name is never discussed?"

"I thought they prided themselves on being gentlemen," said Mrs. Lawrence, wrathfully; "and gentlemen would never permit it."

"Ah, my dear madam, there's the trouble. A man is not necessarily a gentleman because wealth and social position impel him to membership in one of these forcing-houses of luxurious iniquity we call clubs, or because four years in a West-Point monkey-jacket win him a commission as a genteel loafer. A woman's name is held far less in reverence among them than it is among the humblest of our masses. Oh, yes, I anticipate your question," said he, at this juncture, with deprecatory gesture and faint, significant smile. "True, I am not personally a member of any of those clubs, nor do I wish to be, but I know men and mingle with them elsewhere,—everywhere else, in fact. The roof of the club-house cloaks their misdeeds, and worse things are said and done beneath it than outside. As for officers, the only reason why there is apt to be a stronger percentage of common decency among them is that they are chosen from the masses of the people and sent to the Point simply to be moulded, not reformed. Mr. Forrest is an example of the so-called blue-blooded stock. His people are 'swells,' so to speak,—people whose heads are held very high and their morals correspondingly low,—people who think it condescension on their part to notice wage-workers except as menials. Hence I am in no wise surprised to hear of him as I do, even among those who are—well, of his own cloth."

"Surely, Mr. Elmendorf, the officers who have so often dined here do not entertain ill opinions of Mr. Forrest. Such men as Colonel Kenyon, Captain Waring, Major Cranston,—they have known him long and well, and they speak of him, to us at least, most highly."

Again the significant shrug of Elmendorf's shoulders and the sneer

in his tone. "Oh, certainly," said he. "*Noblesse oblige*, or honor among thieves, whichever maxim you choose. I doubt not that in his younger days each of the eminently respectable trio you mention was no more a model of morality than is Mr. Forrest. I have, indeed, heard as much of Captain Waring; but one has only once to penetrate beyond the veil of that professional reserve which they assume, and the details of one another's lives are not such guarded secrets, after all."

"And you really mean that from them—among them you have learned these—these——"

"These particulars of Mr. Forrest's sudden orders to leave the city?" said Elmendorf, dryly, with another shrug. "From where else? Even to the name and station of the lady in the case."

CHAPTER IV.

Not half a mile away from the Allisons' costly residence was the home of Major Cranston, an officer of some thirty years' experience in the cavalry. It was an unpretentious, old-fashioned frame house, that had escaped the deluge of fire that swept the city in '71, and that looked oddly out of place now in the midst of towering apartment blocks or handsome edifices of brick and stone. But Cranston loved the old place, and preferred to keep it intact and as left to him at the death of his father until such time as he should retire from active service. Then he might see fit to rebuild. The property was now of infinitely more value than the house. "You could move that old barrack out to the suburbs, cut down them trees, and cut up the place into buildin'-lots and sell any one of them for enough to build a dozen better houses," said a neighbor who had prospered, as had the Cranstons, by holding on to the paternal estate. But Cranston smilingly said he preferred not to cut up or cut down. "Them" trees and he had grown up together. They were saplings when he was a boy, and had grown to sturdy oakhood when his own youngsters, plains-bred little cavaliers, used to gather their Chicago friends about them under the whispering leaves and thrill their juvenile souls with stirring tales of their doings "out in the Indian country." Louis Cranston was believed to have participated with his father's troop in many a pitched battle with the savage foe before his tenth birthday, and "Patchie," the younger, was known to be so called not because of his mother's having sprung from the distinguished family in which George Patchen was a patron saint, but because he had been born in the Arizona mountains and rocked in a Tonto cradle. Those two boys were now stalwart men, cattle-growers in the Far West, whose principal interest in Chicago was as a market for their branded steers. They had their own vines and fig-trees, their own wives and olive-branches, and after the death of the venerable grandparents the homestead on the shores of Lake Michigan was for some years untenanted.

But therein were stored the old furniture and the old books and pictures, all carefully guarded by one of Cranston's veteran sergeants,

who, disabled by wounds and infirmities, was glad to accept his commander's offer to give to him and his a home and suitable pension in return for scrupulous care of the old place. At long intervals the master had come in on leave, and the neighbors always knew when to expect him, for the snow-shovel or the lawn-mower, holly wreaths or honeysuckles, seemed to pervade the premises, and old McGrath's neatest uniform was hung out to sun and air on the back piazza. Mac was a bibulous veteran at times, a circumstance of which place-hunters were not slow to take advantage on those rare occasions of the owner's home-coming, and many a time did the major receive confidential intimation from the Sheehans, Morriseys, and Meiswinkles in service in the neighborhood that McGrath was neglectful of his patron's premises and over-given to the flowing bowl; but in Mrs. McGrath's stanch protectorate, as in McGrath's own fidelity, Cranston had easy confidence. Twenty years of close communion all over the frontier give fair inkling as to one's characteristics, and Cranston had known Mac and his helpmeet even longer. "Dhrink, yer honor? Faith an' I do, as regularly as iver I drunk the captain's health and prosperity in the ould regiment; and I'd perhaps be doin' it too often, out of excessive ghratitude, but for Molly yonder. She convinces me wid me own crutch, sorr." And Molly confirmed the statement: "I let him have no more than is good for him, major, barrin' Patrick's Day and the First of April, that's Five Forks,—when he always dhrinks as many fingers at a time. Then he's in arrest till Appomattox, nine days close,—and then I let him out for a bit again. Never fear, major, I'm the dishbursin' officer of the family, an' the grocer has his orders." Mac had his other anniversaries, be it understood, on all of which occasions he repaired to Donnelly's Shades on a famous thoroughfare two blocks west of the Cranstons' back gate, and entertained all comers with tales of dragoon days that began in the 50's and spread all over the century. Shrewd historians of the neighborhood made it a point to look up the dates of Brandy Station and Beverly Ford, of Aldie, Winchester, and Waynesboro', of Yellow Tavern and Five Forks, as well as to keep tab on subsequent events of which history makes no mention, but which troopers know well, for Summit Springs, Superstition Mountain, Sunset Pass, and Slim Buttes—a daring succession of sibilant tongue-tacklers—were names of Indian actions from Dakota to the Gila the old soldier loved to dwell upon, even if Donnelly's whiskey had not put clogs on his tongue. Two things was Mac always sure of at the Shades,—good listeners and bad liquor; but the trooper who has tasted every tipple, from "pine-top" to mescal, will forgive the latter if sure of the former. Donnelly had his "ordhers," as Mrs. Mac said. The sergeant was to be accorded all respect and credit, and a hack to fetch him home when his legs got as twisted as his tongue: Mrs. McGrath would be around within forty-eight hours to audit and pay the accounts. Donnelly sought to swindle the shrewd old laundress at the start, and thereby lost Mac's valuable custom for six long and anniversary-laden months. Then he came to terms, and didn't try it again for nearly two years, which was remarkable in a saloon-man. This time Donnelly was forgiven only upon restitution of the amount

involved and the presentation to Mrs. McGrath of a very ornate brooch in emeralds and brilliants—or something imitative thereof—representing the harp of Erin. From this time on things had gone smoothly.

A wonderful woman was Mrs. Mac, as her husband never failed to admit. She had slaved and saved for him in a score of garrisons. They had their little hoard carefully invested. They hired a young relative and countryman to do the hard work about the premises, and they guarded every item of the major's property with a fidelity and care that knew no lapse, for Mrs. Mac was never so scrupulous as when her lord was in his cups. "No," said Cranston, when a neighbor once asked him if he wasn't afraid of serious losses through Mac's occasional inebriety. "The more he drinks the stricter her vigilance, and she's the smarter of the two."

But there came a time when the major found it necessary to caution Mrs. Mac, and that was when it was brought to his ears that McGrath's nephew, the young Irish helper above referred to, was a frequent attendant at certain turbulent meetings held over on the west side, where he had been seen drunk on two occasions. "It's one thing to allow an old soldier like Mac his occasional indulgence," said Cranston; "he was started that way, and he never becomes riotous or ugly; but there is no excuse for the boy. Those meetings alleged to be held in the interests of the workingmen are attended mainly by tramps and loafers, fellows who couldn't be hired to do a day's honest work, and are addressed by professional demagogues who have no end but mischief in view. You saw what resulted here when you first came in, seven years ago. I don't want to hurt Mac's feelings by saying he's a bad example to his nephew, and I don't want to let him know where the boy has been spending his evenings. He'd break every bone in the youngster's skin if he thought he was consorting with anarchists and rioters; and I tell you because you couldn't have heard of it or you yourself would have taken the boy in hand."

"Taken him in hand, sorr? I'd 'a' broke the snow-shovel over the scandalous back av him if I'd heerd a worrd av it. He's aff to-day sparkin' the girls in the block beyant, but I'll wait for him to-night. Thank ye, sorr, for not tellin' Mac. It's his own poor sister's boy, an' like his own that was tuk from us at Apache, but Mac would kill him before he'd have him trainin' wid them Dutchmen and daygoes." (Mrs. McGrath did not share Mulvany's views that "There are Oirish and Oirish." Even Phœnix Park had failed to shake her view that anarchy and assassination belonged only to "foreigners." No Irishman, said she, was in the bloody bomb business of '86; and as for Dr. Cronin, that was a family matther entirely.) "But if Tim's been goin' to meetin' wid the like av them, he's been misguided by them as knows betther. Savin' your presence, major, what would the gentleman be doin' wid him that was here last week?"

Cranston looked at his housekeeper in surprise. "The gentleman who came to look over my books?—Mr. Elmendorf?"

"The same, sorr. He came three times while the major was away, and Tim was forever sayin' what a fine, smart man he was for a foreigner, and how he was for helpin' the poor man."

Cranston gave vent to a long whistle of surprise and sudden enlightenment. "When was Mr. Elmendorf last there?" he presently inquired.

"All last week, sorr; three times at least I let him into the library as usual, but he only stayed there awhile. He was talkin' outside wid Tim an hour."

The major turned away in deep thought. Only two months before, ordered from the Far West to take station at the new post near the city, he had met Elmendorf when dining at the Allisons'. The next morning he found him at head-quarters, chatting affably with the aides-de-camp, and later he encountered him at Brentano's. Just how it came about Cranston could not now remember, but he had invited Elmendorf to step in and look over some old books of his father's, and as the tutor became enthusiastic he was bidden to come again. Out at the post the major established his modest soldier home, much missing the companionship of his devoted wife, who was in Europe at the time with their only daughter. Every week, perhaps, he would run in for half a day to look over his possessions, but meantime he had given Elmendorf authority to make a complete catalogue of the books, as well as to make himself at home in the library, a room which Mrs. McGrath kept in apple-pie order. But the fame of Elmendorf had spread from the city to the garrison, and Cranston had already begun to wish he had been less impulsive in his invitation, when Mrs. Mac told him of the missionary work being done among his retainers by this stranger within his gates. The question now was, what action could be justifiably taken?

Entering the old dimly-lighted study, long sacred to his father's use and now sacred to his memory, the major found on every hand evidences that Elmendorf had indeed been at work. Out from their accustomed places on the shelves the books had been dragged, and were now stacked up about the room in perplexing disarray. Some lay open upon the table, others on the desk near the north window, his father's favorite seat, and here some of the rarest of the collection were now piled ten and fifteen deep. On the table in loose sheets were some pencilled memoranda on names, authors, and dates of publication. On the desk were several pads or blocks of the paper much used by writers for the press, and, face upward, among them, held by an old-fashioned glass paper-weight, were a dozen leaves closely pencilled in Elmendorf's bold hand. Cranston raised the weight, expecting to find some more memoranda concerning his precious books, but was not entirely surprised to read, in glaring head-lines, "The Wage-Worker's Weapon," followed by some vehement lines denunciatory of capital, monopoly, "pampered palates in palatial homes, boodle-burdened, beer-bloated legislators," etc., the sort of alliterative and inflammatory composition which, distributed in the columns of the papers of the *Alarm* and *Arbeiter Zeitung* stamp, was read aloud over the evening pipes and beer to knots of applauding men, mostly tramps and idlers, in a thousand groggeries throughout the bustling city. Cranston lifted the file from the desk as though to read beyond the first sheet, but on second thought replaced it. Something about the "threatening bayo-

nets of Federal hirelings" at the foot of the first page promised lively developments farther on, and recalled vividly the editorials in similar strain that had been brought to the attention of the officials at head-quarters, more than one of whom had expressed the belief that they could spot the author on sight. Cranston turned from it in some disgust, and resumed the contemplation of the work already done. All he expected—all he had stipulated for—was a catalogue of the books, —something he himself had not had time to make, and a "job" which, to a man of scholarly tastes and education upon whose hands time was apparently hanging heavily and that equivalent of time, money, hanging not at all, would prove agreeable and acceptable. Cranston's father loved those books, and had grouped them on his shelves according to their subjects, history, art, science, the drama, the classics, standard fiction, and modern literature having received each its allotted space, and not for a heavy reward would the son have changed them; but here already were more than half these prized possessions tumbled promiscuously all over the room, and the soldier could have sworn in hearty trooper fashion over the disarray, but for the silent presence of his mother's portrait above the mantel facing the father's desk. He had heard only recently of the tutor's avowed proclivities for tearing down and stirring up the existing order of things, and here was conclusive evidence that the gifted Elmendorf proposed the complete rebuilding on his own lines of the fabric that was the revered father's happiest work, even while incidentally devoting some hours each day to stirring up a similar overturning in society. That Elmendorf was not destitute of practical business views, however, may be made apparent from the fact that when Cranston had intimated a desire to have him name the sum he would consider a fair compensation for the work, intending then to add a liberal percentage to the estimate, the scholar replied that it would have to depend upon the number of days and hours it took from other avocations, and it was now evident that a long engagement was in contemplation.

Closing the door after him and bidding Mrs. McGrath allow no one to enter the study until his return unless Mr. Elmendorf should come in, Major Cranston went in search of him. It was barely noon, up to which hour he was supposed to be closeted with his pupil at the Allisons' home. Then after a light luncheon it was his wont to sally forth on a tramp, Cary starting, but rarely returning, with him. When Cranston was at head-quarters a fortnight previous, the officers were speaking of the almost daily appearance about two o'clock of Mr. Elmendorf, who was possessed with a desire to get into the general's office and impress that magnate with his views concerning the impending crisis. The general, however, being forearmed, was always too busy to accord the interview, one experience having proved more than enough. Everybody was beginning to give Elmendorf the cold shoulder there, and by this time, reasoned Cranston, he must have had sense enough to discontinue his visits. Here, however, he underrated Elmendorf's devotion to his principles, for such was the tutor's conviction of their absolute wisdom and such his sense of duty to humanity that he was ready to encounter any snub rather than be balked in his de-

termination to right the existing wrongs. Cranston did not want to go to the Allisons' and ask for Elmendorf. He had that to say which could not be altogether pleasant and was altogether personal, and he had no right to carry possible discord into a fellow-citizen's home. The Lambert Library, a noble bequest, stood within easy range of Allison's house and his own, a sort of neutral ground, and from there did Cranston despatch a special messenger with a note.

"Will Mr. Elmendorf kindly drop in at the Lambert Library when he has finished luncheon? I have to take the three P.M. train back to Sheridan, and desire five minutes' conversation relative to affairs at the study as I found them this morning," was all the major wrote, but it was nearly half-past one before that boy returned with the answer. There was no telephone at the Allisons', for the millionaire had long since ordered it out, finding his home peace broken up by incessant summonses from all manner of people. Cranston waited impatiently, and meant to upbraid the boy. "It wasn't my fault, sir: the gentleman was at lunch and wouldn't write until he had finished," was the explanation. Cranston tore open the unexpected reply:

"Mr. Elmendorf deeply regrets that an important engagement in a distant quarter of the city will render it impossible to meet Major Cranston as proposed. If the major will kindly write his suggestions they will receive all consideration and prompt acknowledgment."

And it had taken Elmendorf, said Cranston, wrathfully, at least three-quarters of an hour to concoct that palpable dodge.

The railway station was a mile away, and he had several matters to attend to. It was one of his weaknesses that when he had a thing to say and meant to say it, delay was a torment. The librarian was a man whom he knew well. "Mr. Wells, I've got to write quite a letter and do it quick," said he, entering the office. "Can I impose upon your good nature here?"

"Why, certainly, major. Miss Wallen will type it for you as fast as you can talk it," said the librarian, rising and indicating a slender girl who was bending busily over her typewriter.

"Oh, I didn't mean that," the major began; "and yet I don't know, I've sometimes had to dictate reports. The only thing is, I shouldn't care to hurt a man's feelings by letting him see that somebody else knew of the matter; yet I'll want to keep a copy, for I've got to give him a rasping."

"Miss Wallen can write a dozen copies at once, if you wish," said Wells; "and as for hurting anybody's feelings, nobody could extract a word from her on the subject."

"Then if the young lady will be so kind," said Cranston, bowing courteously, "I should be most glad to avail myself." Making no reply, the girl deftly fitted the sheets to the roller and waited expectant. "Don't go, Mr. Wells. I assure you there is no need," said Cranston, as the librarian started to leave the room.

"I've got to: it's my dinner-hour. Miss Wallen goes at twelve, and I after her return. If there's anything the office can do for you, don't hesitate to ask." And with that he was gone.

Miss Wallen's slim white hands were poised in readiness. "Chicago,

June —, 1894," began the major. There was an instant of swift-clicking keys and a pause for more. "June —, 1894," repeated Cranston.

"Yes, sir, I have that."

"Already? I didn't suppose it could be done so fast. Do I give you the address now?"

"If you please."

"Mr. Max Elmendorf," he began. "Shall I spell it for you?"

The swift fingers faltered. Some strange sudden cloud overshadowed the bright intelligent face. The girl turned abruptly away a moment, then suddenly arose and hastened to the water-cooler under the great window across the room. Keeping her back resolutely towards the visitor, she swallowed half a glass of water, then presently resumed her seat. "Excuse me," she said. "I am ready now."

"You found the heat very trying, I fear," said the major. "Pray do not attempt this if you are tired after your walk. It can wait as well as not."

"It is something that doesn't have to be done to-day?" she asked, looking quickly up.

"Certainly not, if the sun has been too much for you. Has it?"

No answer for a moment. "It isn't the sun," finally replied Miss Wallen, "but I—should rather not take this."

CHAPTER V.

THAT evening as Major Cranston was getting into uniform again and pondering not a little over the odd behavior of Mr. Wells's stenographer, the young lady in question, her day's library duties at an end, was walking thoughtfully homeward. She chose a route that carried her close to the dancing waters of the lake. It was a longer way, but she loved it and the fresh, cool wind sweeping inland from the seemingly boundless sheet of blue. She was a slender girl, rather above the medium height, a girl with dark earnest eyes and heavy coils of brown, lustrous hair, and a grave, sweet face, whereon already there were traced indelibly lines that told of responsibility and work and care. She dressed simply, inexpensively, yet with a certain style that well became the willowy grace of her figure. She moved swiftly, but without apparent effort. She walked well, bore herself well, and sped along on her homeward way as though absorbed in her thoughts, except when occasionally glancing out over the sparkling expanse to her right. Other women, and nurse-maids with romping children, dawdled about the sunny foot-path along the breakwater; Miss Wallen alone seemed walking with definite purpose. Nearly opposite the Grant Memorial the roadway swept close by the path, and here it became necessary for her to cross to the western side. Carriages were rolling almost ceaselessly by, and, seeing her waiting an opportunity, a Park policeman signalled to the drivers of those nearest at hand and beckoned to the girl to come on. She obeyed, somewhat timidly glancing about her. One carriage, drawn by spirited bays, had too much headway, and was well upon the crossing before the coachman could help it. It brought

her almost face to face with the occupants, and for an instant hid her from the sight of the friendly policeman. When she disappeared, her eyes were downcast, her features placid, even a little pale; when, an instant later, he again caught sight of her, Miss Wallen's eyes were flashing and her soft cheeks aflame. A man in the carriage sitting opposite two ladies, one of middle age and dignified bearing, the other young and divinely fair, had seemed suddenly to recognize her and whipped off his hat in somewhat careless fashion. Taking no notice whatever of the salutation beyond coloring vividly, Miss Wallen passed quickly behind the carriage and was speedily over the crossing.

"A friend of yours, Mr. Elmendorf?" asked the elder lady, languidly.

"A friend of—Mr. Forrest's, rather," was the significant reply, and both ladies started, the younger turning to see who it could be, the elder staring one instant after her, then suddenly confronting Elmendorf again. One swift glance at her niece, and Mrs. Lawrence, with uplifted eyebrows, framed her question with sensitive, speechless lips. Elmendorf nodded sapiently. Then Miss Allison turned around.

"What's her name? Who is she?"

"Her name is Wallen. She is employed at the Lambert Library."

"Oh, indeed!" exclaimed Miss Allison, in quick and lively interest. "I've heard Mr. Forrest speak of her. I do wish we could see her again." Whereupon Mrs. Lawrence and Mr. Elmendorf exchanged glances of commiseration.

A quarter of a mile farther up the drive Mr. Elmendorf checked the driver. "If you will excuse me now, ladies, I have a call to make near here, and will leave you. Should Cary return before I do, kindly ask him not to go out again until I see him."

Mrs. Lawrence suggested driving him to his destination, but Elmendorf declined. Two minutes more, and he had disappeared from their view among the shrubbery, and in ten was rapidly walking southward along a busy thoroughfare. Just as he expected, coming up the opposite side of the street, moving swiftly and with downcast eyes, was Miss Wallen. Springily he crossed, and the next instant was lifting his hat in more respectful fashion than when in the park, half confronting, half turning as though to join her. Barely noticing him at all, Miss Wallen moved determinedly on, and Elmendorf, following, placed himself at her side.

"I could not but note your manner to me yesterday in the library, Miss Wallen, and indeed on several previous occasions, and in spite of it I venture to ask you to listen patiently to me for a moment. My object is such as to entitle my words to your respect, not resentment. It is for your own sake, your mother's, your name, that I brave your indignation again."

"If it is to repeat what you intimated the other day, Mr. Elmendorf," said the girl, in low, firm tone, "I refuse to listen. You have no right to speak in such a way."

"I have the right to try and save a poor girl from fatal error. I have devoted the best years of my life to the cause of the poor as against the rich, the down-trodden against the purse-proud. I should

not have presumed to speak to you on such a subject had I not heard your name lightly, slightingly used among these very satraps whom Mr. Forrest hails as companions,—comrades. It is to protect you from the misjudgment, the censure of others that I strive to warn you. Pardon me if I recall to you that it was partially, at least, on my recommendation that you were given the position at the library, and that now my name as your endorser is measurably involved. Of course if after what I have to say you persist in receiving Mr. Forrest's—attentions, as we will call them, you must do so at your own risk."

"Mr. Elmendorf, I have told you that there is no truth whatever in these reports."

"I do not say there is. It is to warn you of the scandalous, outrageous things these people in so-called high society say of people who are in humbler walks of life that I ventured to relate what I'd heard. It is to obviate the possibility of them in future."

"I have told you, Mr. Elmendorf, that I need no such warning, that I will listen to no such affront. I refuse to believe that any gentleman of Mr. Forrest's set has spoken ill of me. I know none of them, they know nothing of me."

"Knew nothing, perhaps, until your name became linked with his, —how," said he, with significant shrug of his shoulders, "I know not, unless he himself has boyishly boasted of——"

But here Miss Wallen stopped short and faced him. "I will hear no more of this, either now or hereafter," she said, with blazing eyes, then turned abruptly, and entered the hall-way of an apartment-house close at hand and shut the door in his face. It was not her home, as Elmendorf knew very well, but possibly friends lived there who would give her refuge and welcome. At all events, he had received his *congé*, and there was nothing for it but to go; and go he did, in high dudgeon. Not until Miss Wallen, watching from an upper window in the room of a friend and fellow-worker, had seen him board a car and disappear with it far down the street, did she resume her homeward walk; and now her eyes were wet with indignant tears.

That Mr. Elmendorf should have asserted that it was through his influence, "partially, at least," Miss Wallen had received her appointment in the library was characteristic of Mr. Elmendorf. Coming to the city himself a stranger, only the year previous, he had spent some hours there each day in reading and writing and study, and had early made acquaintance with Mr. Wells, the librarian, greatly impressing that gentleman at first with the fluency of his chat and the extent of his travel, information, and culture. John Allison, millionaire and manager, was one of the trustees of the Lambert bequest, and when Cary came home from boarding-school in April—a premature appearance which the superintendent's letter fully explained —Allison didn't know what to do with him. "I wish I knew the right sort of tutor to take him in hand," said he to Wells, and Elmendorf, apparently deep in a volume across the office, heard, and promptly acted upon the hearing. He asked Wells for a letter of introduction and recommendation. Wells, having known the applicant less than a

fortnight, was pleased with him and said what he could. Allison was impressed by the applicant's fluency and apparent frankness, and in less than a week the erudite Elmendorf found himself in halcyon waters. Then came the foreign trip, another thing to rejoice in; but before he sailed Elmendorf had had an opportunity of doing good to his kind, as he conceived it. Seeking an inexpensive lodging on his arrival in Chicago, he had found a neat, cheerful home under the roof of an elderly widow, a Mrs. Wallen, in a little house on the north side. She lived alone with her daughter, who, it presently transpired, was her main support. There was a son, a stalwart fellow, too, who, being only twenty-four and a man of some education and ability, should have been the mother's prop and stay in her declining years, and so he would have been, very possibly, but for the fact that he had provided himself with encumbrances of his own in the shape of a wife, two children, and numerous debts. He was provident in no other way. "Martin," as the mother fondly said, "would have made a mark in the world if he'd only been started right," but as Mart started himself he started wrong. So long as the father lived, both brother and sister had been well educated and gently reared, for Mr. Wallen was a man of scholarly tastes, but a poor man slaving on a poor man's salary. He had little to leave his children beyond his blessing and the care of their aging mother. Martin was already pledged to a girl schoolmate when the father died, and Jeannette, his sister, who seemed to be the only practical member of the household, promptly withdrew from school, invested her savings in a typewriter, spent her days in the care of her mother and the little house, two rooms in which were presently advertised as to let furnished, went to evening school at a business college, practised stenography and typewriting when not doing housework, washing dishes, or making clothes for her mother and herself, and patiently, pluckily, cheerily looked forward to the time when Mart could help. Mart spent six months "hunting for something to suit," and found nothing he liked so much as making love to his pretty, penniless neighbor. The clerkships he was offered didn't pay twenty dollars a week, which was the least he thought a man of his ability and education should accept. Jeannette told him the proper way was to take ten if he could get it, and work his way up; but Mart disapproved of women's interference in his affairs. It ended in his finally getting a bottom-of-the-list berth in the freight dépôt of a big railway, and a wife forthwith. Jeannette said nothing. She had taken Mart's measure and saw this coming. "If I do not soon have to take care of Mart's wife and babies, I'll be in luck," was the thought that possibly occurred to her; but she was a silent little body, much given to shrewd and common-sense observation of the world in which she lived. She was a sunny-natured, merry-hearted child in the old days, and even as she grew older and more burdened with care the little home still echoed to the sound of her blithe song as she flitted from room to room about her work, ever brave, hopeful, uncomplaining. "If I only had Jenny's spirits," said the widow to her one lodger, "I might do something, too," but, as she hadn't Jenny's spirits or disposition, by a good deal, the be-

reaved lady thought it unnecessary to try. It was Jenny who bore the burden of every detail, Jenny who did their humble marketing, Jenny who made the hard bargains with landlord and coal-merchant, Jenny who taught and supervised the one clumsy damsel who was brought in as cook, scullion, laundress, and maid-of-all-work, and Jenny who, after all, did more than she taught. It was Jenny who cut and fashioned almost every garment worn by either her mother or herself, who made and trimmed the modest little hats or bonnets, who watched the bargain-counters at the great retail shops and wished that women didn't have to wear gloves and buttoned boots; Jenny who had to follow up their flitting lodgers,—young men who folded their tents like the Arabs they were, and as silently stole away out of the house, leaving sometimes a big lodging-bill and little luggage; Jenny who presently had to nurse Mart's wife and baby, just as she expected, for Mart lost that job, and the house he had rented, and the furniture he hadn't paid for and that was seized just when most needed. So baby Number One first saw the light under the roof that Jenny's hard work paid for,—a lodger having opportunely "skipped." And all the while she managed to keep up her study and practice, and to do little odd jobs in copying, sitting far into the dawn sometimes with aching arms and wrists and burning eyes and whirling brain. There was no yielding to "beauty sleep" for poor Jenny. Dark circles often settled underneath the brave, steadfast eyes, and big, blinding tears sometimes welled up from unseen depths when no one was near to spy upon her woman's weakness, and the very people she slaved for were often querulous and complaining, and Mart's wife had about as much helpfulness as a consumptive old cow. Jenny had to tell Mart he must find work and pay their board, or some portion of it, and Mart got another berth at another railway dépôt, and, without paying anything whatever for the months he and his had lived under the mother's roof, or much for the new furniture, moved into another house, where the family circle was presently reinforced by the coming of another baby. Meantime, however, Jenny's skill, quickness, and accuracy had been steadily bringing her work into favor. A girl friend and fellow-student had a good position in a down-town office, where lawyers and business-men brought many a long paper demanding immediate copies, and thither Jenny moved her typewriter, shrewdly calculating that the money she could earn would more than offset the expense of a good servant at home. As for car-fare, she meant to walk: she needed exercise. As for luncheon, she'd carry it with her in her little basket. The plan worked well. There were some days and weeks in which she was given as much as she could possibly finish, but there were others —alack! many others—when nothing came. There was a winter when she wore old clothes, a winter through which other young women in the great hive of a business block were blooming in gowns and garments that were of latest mode and material. It was, so far as work was concerned, either a feast or a famine with her, and she longed for just such a position as that held by an older scholar, who was stenographer and typewriter on salary in the office of a great law firm and yet was enabled to take frequent transcribing or copying from outside;

but for a billet of this kind she looked in vain. Then came another winter. How it affected Miss Wallen can best be told through this simple fact, that she was no longer able to ride home even in the dark wet evenings. Mart had again been turned out of house and home, and came with his ailing wife and wailing babies to the doting mother's door, and again was Jenny burdened with their maintenance. Mart had struck. There had been a scaling down of wages for all hands. Most of them, realizing that these were hard times and that other and better were coming, stood by the company. Mart was a leader at the meetings of the employees, and a brilliant orator. With all the eloquence of which he was capable he urged his fellows to stand together and strike. He was one of a committee of five sent to see the local manager. The manager showed the facts, and the other men were satisfied that things were about as he showed. They had been long in his employ, and Mart but a short time. The manager addressed himself to the old men, rather ignoring the new, and Mart's tongue and temper got away with him. He said he'd strike anyhow, and he did. He struck his own name off the company's books.

And so during these dark, dreary winter evenings, sometimes wet and raw, sometimes bitterly cold, quitting when she could her desk at five o'clock, yet often kept pegging away until later, Miss Jeannette Wallen walked those crowded blocks below the State Street bridge and all the many, many squares that interposed between her and her little home. As the days began to lengthen and the cold to strengthen, she sometimes reached there well-nigh frozen and exhausted, to be welcomed and regaled not so much with hot tea and loving words as by wailing infants and complaining women,—Mart being, as usual, away at some soul-stirring meeting, where much was said about the wrongs of the workingman, but nothing thought of those of the workingwoman.

And then came an adventure. Many a time had she been accosted by street prowlers, and sometimes followed, but her rule had been to make no reply, simply to walk straight on, and look neither to the right nor to the left. One dark evening in early January she had been working late, and it was nearly seven as she passed the river. A few blocks farther north she overtook a man whose unsteady gait did not prevent his quickening speed and striving in turn to overtake her. Finding him at her heels and his detaining hand actually on her arm, her nerve gave way, and she took to flight, her pursuer following. Half a block ahead and around a corner was the apartment-house where she had acquaintances, and into the hall-way Jenny bolted, hoping to turn and slam the door into the blackguard's face, but, to her horror, the heavy portal refused to swing. Despairingly she touched the electric button, then turned pluckily to face her pursuer and warn him off. But the fellow was daft with drink, and, with maudlin exultation, he sprang after her and strove to seize her in his arms, laughing at her frantic blows. Then the inner door suddenly opened and tumbled them both into the hall and into the arms of a tall, dark, heavily-moustached man who looked amazed one second and enlightened the next, for he seated the half-fainting girl in a chair, kicked the intruder into the gutter, and then sprang back into the hall in time to catch her as she

was almost toppling over on the tiled floor. This brought her the second time within the clasp of a muscular arm, and then she gasped an inquiry for her friends, and he sent the staring hall-boy to ask if they were in, and stepped into his own room and brought forth a glass of wine, which he calmly ordered her to sip, and then, seeing her heart was fluttering like a terrified bird's, he spoke gently and soothingly, and little by little she had regained some composure when the boy came down from the fourth floor to say the ladies were out.

Then she would have gone, and she strove to go, but her knees shook, and he sent the boy with a message and made her wait, seated in the hall chair, and came forth again from his room in a fur overcoat and cap, and a moment later a cab was at the door. She recoiled and said she could go in a car; but the cars were two blocks away. "Kindly permit me to see you safely home," he said. "You have had a terrible fright, and are in no condition to walk." At all events, she was in no condition to rebel, and was glad to sink back into the cushioned corner of the hansom. "I'll have to trouble you for the street and number," said he, apologetically, as he stepped calmly in beside her.

"Oh, indeed I mustn't trouble you to come. The driver can——" And then, alas! she remembered that she had but ten cents about her.

"The driver can, perhaps, but in this case he won't," was the grave, half-smiling answer. "Number what? Which street, if you please?"

Helplessly she gave them. Commandingly he repeated them to cabby peeping down through his pygmy man-trap in the roof, and away went the two-wheeler. Her home was but six blocks distant. "You must let me pay the cabman," she faltered, not well knowing how she was going to do so.

"I would, if it would comfort you," said he, calmly, "but he's already engaged to me by the hour for the evening."

"Then my share of it, at least," she persisted.

"That I estimate to be possibly fifteen cents," said he, as the vehicle drew up at the curb; "and I think I owe you ten times the amount for the pleasure of kicking such an arrant cur as that specimen. Has he ever annoyed you before? Do you know him?"

"By sight only," said she, the color at last reappearing in her face. "He is often on that street corner below the Beaulieu, but I do not know his name."

"He will be there less frequently in future. And now is there nothing I can do? Are you sure you have everything you need at home?"

"More than I need,"—very much more, she could have added to herself, thinking of her many unbidden lodgers,—"but you haven't given me your name, and I owe you so much—besides the fifteen cents." She was trying to smile now.

"You owe me nothing, unless——" he was turning away, but something in her sweet, earnest face drew him back,—"unless it be permission to call and ask how you are after all this excitement."

Miss Wallen's face clouded. Where could she receive him? Were not every nook and corner of the house except her own little room given over to the use of occupants in whom this distinguished-looking

gentleman could be expected to feel no interest whatever? He saw the hesitation, and spoke at once.

"I beg your pardon," said he, frankly and heartily. "I had no right whatever to be intrusive. Good-night, and—better luck next time." With that he was into the cab and off in a trice.

Two days afterwards Miss Wallen called at the Beaulieu on her way down town, clambered to the fourth floor, and asked her friends the name of the gentleman who occupied the left front room, ground-floor. They said he was a Mr. Forrest, but he'd gone away—he was often away; from which she decided him to be one of the knights errant of the commercial world, but vastly unlike in tone and manner those who usually accosted her. Two weeks afterwards, as she was seated at her desk in the big office building, while her friend Miss Bonner was clicking away at the opposite window, the door opened, and in came an elderly lawyer for whom she had done many a page of accurate work. "Miss Wallen," said he, "can you do some quick copying for a friend of mine? Let me present Lieutenant Forrest, of the regular army."

CHAPTER VI.

That Miss Wallen was no more surprised than her new customer was apparent at a glance, but there was no time wasted in remarks on previous meetings or present weather. It seemed that the gentleman in question needed three typewritten copies of a long essay he had written, and needed them at once. It was now four P.M. on Tuesday. He came for the work at five o'clock Wednesday afternoon, and, although she had wrought hard and faithfully, it lacked completion by just a page. "It will be ready in ten minutes, sir, if you can wait," said Miss Wallen, rising.

"Pray be in no hurry," said Mr. Forrest. "I have nothing to do to-night but read it over." He took a vacant chair and produced the evening paper, but through its pages he had already glanced while at the club; over its pages he was glancing now at the slender, fragile-looking girl with those busy, flying fingers and the intent gaze in her tired eyes. He saw how wan, even sallow, she looked. The lines of care were on her forehead and already settling about the corners of the soft, sensitive mouth. He did not know that all alone she had returned to the office the previous evening and worked until midnight, then hied her homeward fast as cable-car could bear her, only, with racking nerves and aching limbs, to toss through almost sleepless hours until the pallid dawn. He did not know that in order that he might have this work on time she had never left the building since eight A.M. that day. Silently she finished the last page, counted and arranged the sheets, shaking out the intervening carbons, quickly bound each set with heavier cover, and then stood before him with her work. The pale yellow gleam of the wintry twilight was streaming through the west window, the most unbecoming and trying ever girl had to face, and she faced it unflinchingly. Forrest quickly arose.

"I fear this has been heavy work, Miss Wallen," he said, regret-

fully. "You must make allowance for my inexperience. I have to leave town to-morrow, and needed this before going. Mr. Langston—an old friend—brought me in to you. I—I hope you will let me pay you—all I think it worth."

"I could have got along faster if the manuscript had been a little clearer," said the girl, smiling slightly. "Some of it was hard to decipher, and the technical terms were new to me. If you will look it over and let me know how nearly correct it is, I will then make out my bill accordingly."

"There won't be time for that," said he, "and Mr. Langston says you are never inaccurate. He tells me, furthermore, that you brought my scrawl to him three times to-day for words he himself could hardly make out. It is over eighteen thousand words, according to my count. I know what such work is worth in New York,"—and now he held forth three crisp ten-dollar bills,—"but this had to be done so rapidly. Will thirty dollars be—anywhere near right?" he asked.

Miss Wallen consulted a memorandum on her desk, gravely searched through her porte-monnaie, found some small coin and a two-dollar bill, then as gravely took two of the bills and handed him the ten, the two, and the small change. "More than sufficient by just twelve dollars and fifteen cents," she quietly said, "provided it be understood that you are to send me a memorandum of any and all errors detected, and I shall be here early to-morrow morning and will be glad to rewrite the pages in which they occur."

But Forrest protested. "I gave twenty-five dollars in New York for work much shorter and done leisurely," said he, "and you have worked long hours. I feel under very great obligation."

"You needn't," said she. "I have made more in the last twenty-four hours than in the previous week. I was only too glad to get the work."

Down the iron stairs clerks and office-boys were clattering. From the crowded pavement a hundred feet below, the thunder of hoofs and wheels and thronging traffic rose on the frosty air. Over the roofs, wind-driven, came the screech of a hundred whistles from foundry, factory, and mill on the wide-spreading west side. Toil-worn men by thousands were laying down their tools and turning eagerly, wearily homeward. The gongs of the cable-cars hammered mad alarums, and swarms of people squeezed upon the platforms. In adjacent office blocks the electric lights were beginning to gleam, and the pallid hues of dying day were fading from the wintry sky. Forrest's business was done, and he had no excuse to linger. She stood there facing him, evidently expecting him to go. Never before in his life had he encountered anything of this description. He had read and heard that many a girl delicately reared was now employed as book-keeper, typewriter, and stenographer in offices all over the land, and here was one, plainly—even poorly—clad, yet proud, independent, self-reliant, and in every word and look and act, no matter how humble her lot, as unmistakably a "lady" as his own sister. He wanted to stay, wanted to impress upon her his appreciation of the service she had done him, wanted to persuade her to accept what he felt

she sorely needed,—the remaining ten dollars of the sum Langston had told him would be about what she would probably charge,—but, after a moment's irresolute pause, he turned abruptly and went to the door.

"I shall be back in a month with more such work, and I shall be fortunate if I can get you to do it for me. Good-night, Miss Wallen, and—thank you."

"Good-night, sir, and thank you."

Forrest went discontentedly over to the Union League. He felt somehow that he hadn't treated that girl right. One or two men from the fort were there,—Waring of the light battery and little "Chip" Sanders of the cavalry. These jovial captains hailed him and besought him in cordial soldier fashion to stay and dine, especially in view of the long trip ahead of him on the morrow, but he begged off. He had an evening's work ahead, and must get home betimes, said he. He compromised, however, on a modest tipple, and, not caring to fight his way through the crowd in either car or street, summoned a cab and was soon comfortably trundling to the north side. One block beyond the river, under the electric lights, he caught sight of a slender, girlish form, swiftly threading a way along the pavement, and recognized at a glance the heroine of the adventure of a fortnight gone, the transcriber of those fruitful pages on the seat by his side, and the object of his thoughts.

"Hold up under those lights yonder," he cried to cabby through the trap in the roof, and cabby, seeing no bar in close proximity, marvelled as he obeyed. Forrest sprang out, turned back, and in another moment was raising his hat to the girl, who glanced up with nervous start and repellent mien that only slowly changed to recognition. Even then there was womanly reserve, and much of it, in her manner.

"Pardon me, Miss Wallen, I never dreamed of such a thing as your walking all the way home, and after such a long day's work. My cab is right here; please let me drive you the rest of the way."

"Thank you, no," she answered, quietly. "I always walk after a long day's work. It is exercise and pleasure both."

"But surely you are very late, and—forgive my reminding you of your recent unpleasant experience."

"No one else ever chased me," she said, "and I don't think even he would had he not been drinking. You seem to have scared him away, for not once have I set eyes on him since."

"But you will ride, won't you? It would be a pleasure—some comfort to my conscience—if I might send you home, after the lot that you have done and the little you would take." They had reached the cab now, and he stopped invitingly, but she never faltered, and only turned towards him and slackened her steps sufficiently to repeat her thanks and a courteous refusal.

"Upon my word, you make me ashamed of my own laziness," said Forrest. "I used to be a good tramper on the Plains, but have been getting out of the way of it. At least I may walk a little way with you, may I not?"

And this she could not well see how to decline. Cabby was dis-

missed with a *douceur*, and Forrest hastened after his new acquaintance. She carried some bundles in her arms, and he offered to take them. He had his own, however, and she declined. He shifted his packet of triplicates under the right arm and tendered her, with courteous bow, the left, and she "preferred to trudge along without it, thank you," yet in so pleasant a way he could not find fault. He walked all the way to her little home, and bade her good-night with the promise that when he returned in February he would be glad to have another eighteen thousand words transcribed in triplicate for seventeen dollars and odd cents.

"You can't," said she, with her same quiet smile. "It will cost eighteen at least. Your fifteen cents change to-day was for my share of the cab."

He was on duty in the judge-advocate's office of the department, as has been said, and had been ordered off on a court-martial. He was back in two weeks, and more work went through that typewriter, and then came days which he spent in study at the Lambert Library, and pages of memoranda and notes which he read to her at her office, which were faithfully stenographed and promptly, accurately typewritten, and there were soon some evening walks home,—several of them,—and Forrest found the way curiously short as compared with the original estimate. He was deeply interested in his work at head-quarters, but the detail was only to last a month or two longer, for then the regular incumbent would have returned from the long leave of absence granted him on account of ill health, and then Forrest himself purposed spending some months abroad, all arrangements for his leave having been already consummated.

One afternoon at the library Mr. Wells came and seated himself by the lieutenant's side. They had had many a long chat together, and were fast friends.

"I'm out of luck," said Wells. "I've seen it coming for months, and ought to have been prepared. My typewriter has given me warning."

"Going to be married, I suppose?"

"Yes, and within six weeks. She's a girl I simply can't replace."

"Why not?"

"Because in my work only a well-educated and highly intelligent girl will answer. I have to dictate sometimes fifty letters a day filled with strange names and technicalities and foreignisms, and there's no time to consult dictionaries and the like,—no leisure, half the time, to read over the letters submitted for my signature. I must trust to my typewriter; and girls educated up to that standard come too high for our salary. I gradually taught Miss Stockton what she knows, so she was content with sixty dollars a month, but I can't get one who can do as well for a hundred, which is more by forty than the directors will allow me."

Forrest was silent a moment. "It is work that demands all a girl's time, I suppose?" he ventured.

"Yes, every bit of it from nine to five, and often to six. She has her evenings at home, however, unless some of our library assistants are sick; then she would have to help at the shelves."

"If you are in no great hurry, will you hold the offer open one week? I know a g—a lady, I should say, who is intelligence and accuracy combined, and who might take it. She has done much work for me, and I know her worth."

"Would she come for sixty dollars, do you suppose?"

"I will ask her," said Forrest, guardedly. He well knew how glad his hard-working typewriter would be to have so permanent and pleasant a station. He more than suspected that many men who came to the busy office in the heart of the city were far from respectful. He remembered how his blood boiled one afternoon when he found a bulky fellow, his hat on the back of his head, his legs outstretched, and a vile cigar tiptilted in his mouth, sitting leering beside her desk.

"You shouldn't permit it," he said to her, later.

"Ah, but I must not quarrel with my bread and butter," was her reply, half mournful, half whimsical. "Not one man in ten thinks of taking off his hat or dropping his cigar when he enters our 'shop.' No, Mr. Forrest, we are wage-workers who can't afford to draw the line at the manners of our customers."

"But—are there not some who—who become impertinent—familiar—if not checked at the start?" he found himself constrained to ask, and the flame that shot into her cheeks told him his suspicion was correct.

"Not often," she answered, presently, "and never more than once. We simply try not to notice small impertinences, Miss Bonner and I, and generally, you know, we are together here."

This was mid-April. The vacancy was to occur at the end of the month. Forrest himself brought Miss Wallen to the library and presented her to Mr. Wells. A gentleman was seated in the librarian's room at the time,—an industrious fellow who had recently appeared, who spent some hours turning over many books, and whom Wells described as a most interesting and travelled man, a graduate of Jena, etc.; but at sight of him Miss Wallen showed slight though unmistakable signs of embarrassment, almost annoyance. He pretended to busy himself with his books, but was evidently listening to what was going on, and Miss Wallen was decidedly constrained. Presently he arose and came forward, saying, with much suavity of manner, "You must pardon my intrusion. I could not but catch something of this conversation, and had I known before that Mr. Wells was contemplating a change here I should have eagerly availed myself of the privilege our friendship gives to recommend this young lady, of whose character and qualifications—we being inmates of the same household—I can speak *ex cathedra*, as it were, and can hardly speak too highly." He went on to say more, taking the floor, as was his custom, to the exclusion of everybody else, and Mr. Forrest withdrew to a distant part of the room. Miss Wallen presently bade Mr. Wells good-night and asked when she might come to see him again, and Wells, looking a trifle vexed, asked for her address and said he would write.

And then Mr. Elmendorf announced that it would give him much pleasure to see Miss Wallen home, and what could she do? Forrest had said nothing about going further. Elmendorf had certainly been

most flattering in his commendation. She had taken a decided dislike to him during the few weeks he had occupied the lodger's room, and had avoided him as much as possible, but it might well be that he was a man of influence in library matters. She had no reason for rebuffing, but good reason for showing gratitude. Forrest gravely bade her good-evening and good luck, and Miss Wallen walked away with her lodger in close attendance. All the way home he descanted on his influence with Wells and the trustees. He was already, he said, contemplating taking a position in the household of Mr. Allison, the millionaire magnate. He took it, in truth, within the week, and wrote Miss Wallen that it had given him much pleasure to urge warmly her claim for the position soon to become vacant. He found they had several other applications, and some who had strong influence, but he would not cease to urge her appointment and keep her well-being in mind. But meantime one day Mr. Wells gladdened the girl's heart by a brief note saying that he had been so favorably impressed with the work she had done for Mr. Forrest that he had determined to tender her the place.

Two days later Forrest came to congratulate her and to bid her adieu, as he would sail for Europe within the week. She tried to thank him, but could not frame the words. She did not lack for language, however, when her mother read to her that night the charming note she had just received from Mr. Elmendorf, felicitating her upon the promotion of her devoted and dutiful daughter, and himself upon the fact that this good fortune was probably due to his determined and persistent presentation of her daughter's claims before the trustees, whom he had frequent opportunity of meeting at Mr. Allison's house. Doubtless Elmendorf considered this presentation equivalent in full for the three weeks' arrears of room rent, a cheque for which he had said should be forthcoming as soon as Mr. Allison paid in advance his first quarter's salary, but which never came at all.

CHAPTER VII.

When Mr. Forrest returned from Europe in the late autumn of '93, he expected to go forthwith to the station of his regiment and devote his energies to those ceaseless, engrossing, yet somewhat narrowing duties that keep a man of mature years, capable of much better things, attending roll-calls, drilling two sets of fours addressed by courtesy as "company," grilling on the rifle-range, and consuming hours of valuable time in work allotted in older services to sergeants. Calling at the War Department on his way, he was asked about the autumn manœuvres and if he had seen any of them. He had seen a great deal, the interest of friends in both the German and Austrian services having enabled him to follow the armies assembled about Metz and Güns to excellent advantage. Returning to his billet after each long day in the saddle, he had spent some hours before retiring in recording his impressions and observations, the result being several big note-books crammed with data of deep interest to the professional

soldier. The adjutant-general took Forrest in to the Secretary of War, and there was some significant talk, the result of which was the intimation that he should again be assigned to temporary duty at department head-quarters in Chicago in order to give him opportunity to write out his notes. Long before this, Forrest's essays on grand tactics and certain papers on military history had won much favor among the studious men in the army, and it was with pride and pleasure that he entered on the allotted task. He wrote, as did Zachary Taylor, a hand that looked much as though a ramrod rather than a pen had been used, and naturally his first thought was to find his transcriber of the previous winter. There she was at her desk in the library, and looking far younger, happier, and better than when he saw her last, and the frank pleasure in her face was good to see as she welcomed him more in manner than in words.

"Certainly," said Miss Wallen; "I shall be glad to give as many evenings to the work as may be necessary. I am too busy here by day." And so as the autumn wore out and the winter wore on, her slender white fingers danced over the keys, and page after page, in neatly typed duplicates, his voluminous notes on the armies of Germany and Austria-Hungary were faithfully transcribed. Home was not so far away now, and her brisk walks led her no longer through sections she had learned to dread. Accustomed for some years to far longer and lonelier tramps in the wintry evenings, she thought nothing of tripping to and fro between the Lambert and the rather crowded little house in which she dwelt. Mart and his wife and babies still sojourned there, and the babies waxed strong and loud and lusty on Aunt Jenny's bounty, never caring whose fingers earned the porridge, so long as their share was ample and frequent. Mart was out of work, and correspondingly out of elbows and temper. Mart had taken to continual meetings and to such drink as he could get treated to or credit for, and still the mother condoned, the wife complained, and Jenny carried the family load. Mart loved to tread the rostrum boards and portray himself as a typical victim of corporation perfidy and capitalistic greed. The railway company from which he had seceded refused to take him back, and other companies, edified by the reports of his speeches in *The Switch Light*, *The Danger Signal*, and other publications avowedly devoted to the interest of the down-trodden operatives of the railway and manufacturing companies, thought that in a winter when many poor fellows were out of work through no fault of their own, beyond having exercised the right of suffrage the wrong way, the few vacancies should be given to men more likely to render faithful service. Mart's wife, impressed with the idea that she must do something, took in sewing, and took the sewing to ask Jenny to show her how, which in nine cases out of ten Jenny did practically. If the little money thus earned had gone to pay for the babies' milk or Mart's whiskey bills, Jenny would have been grateful; but even these shillings, earned with her numbed and weary fingers, somehow found their way to Mart's broad palm and thence to the dram-shop, though not to that which had claims for goods already delivered. And then followed scenes that covered the poor girl with shame and indignation. To her

office at the library one winter evening, when Wells was reading the late mail, and Mr. Forrest, seated at a neighboring desk with a big atlas before him, was far away among the glinting *pickelhaubes* on the banks of the Moselle, a man came with an account which he wished Miss Wallen to settle. It was Martin Wallen's bar bill for the autumn months at Donnelly's Shades, and the girl flushed with mortification. "This is something with which I have nothing to do," said she. "I would not pay it if I had the money."

"I was told to come to you," said the man. "It's your brother's account, and he said you'd promised him the money time and again. If it ain't paid we'll send for the furniture." And then he wanted to show it to Wells, who waved him off in annoyance; and then he looked as though he would like to interest the other occupant of the room in the matter, but something about that gentleman's face as he arose and came forward proved unsympathetic. "I'll send this bill in again on the 31st," said Mr. Donnelly, "and if it ain't paid then——"

But the tall, brown-eyed, brown-moustached man was walking straight at him, looking him through and through, and there would have been a collision in the office had not Donnelly backed promptly out through the door-way. This merely transferred the scene of it and involved a third party, for there, just outside the ground-glass partition, ostensibly hunting for a book in the revolving case, and humming a lively tune, was Elmendorf. Recoiling to avoid contact with the advancing Forrest, the bill-collector backed into the listening tutor and bumped him up against a table.

"Oh, beg pardon," said Elmendorf, as though in no wise aware who his bumper might be, and then edged off towards the corridor beyond, apparently desirous of escaping further connection with the affair. But Forrest, even in the dim light of the anteroom, recognized him at a glance. More and more, ever since the return from Europe, had he grown to dislike and distrust the man. More than once had he seen an expression on Miss Wallen's face when Wells happened to mention Elmendorf that gave ground for the belief that she, too, had no pleasant recollection of her erstwhile lodger; but never had she opened her lips upon the subject. Indeed, bright and intelligent as was the girl when she chose to talk, both Wells and Forrest had found that when she preferred to be silent it was useless to question. But here, skulking in the anteroom, where reading was out of the question, where, however, one might easily hear what was going on in the private office, here was Elmendorf again, and though Donnelly's footfalls were audible to all as he came pounding up the stairway and turned from the corridor into the office rooms, not a sound of others had been heard. The main stairway—that which led to the great reading-rooms of the library proper—was on the southern front. Only those having business with the head librarian or the trustees were supposed to come this way. Forrest often read, wrote, and studied here, because the more valuable atlases and books of reference were near at hand, and whenever not writing for Wells Miss Wallen was at work on his notes. It flashed upon Forrest that the tutor had some object other than book-hunting in that noiseless visit, and he called him back. "Would you

mind waiting a moment, Mr. Elmendorf?" said he. "I should like to speak with you after I've said a word to this—gentleman." Then, coolly pushing beyond both, he closed the corridor door and turned on the electric light.

"Mr. Donnelly," said he, facing the now nervous-looking Irishman, "you know as well as I that no woman on earth is liable for the liquor-bills of any man, even a relative. What brought you here?"

"Me legs, I s'pose, an' me own affairs. What's it to you, anyhow?" But Donnelly was shifting rather unsteadily on those same legs and twisting his bill in his hands.

"This, to begin with," said Forrest, very coolly, though his blood was boiling and the impulse to floor the fellow was strong within him. "An old fellow campaigner of mine, Sergeant McGrath, has told me——" but there was no need to go further. Donnelly's tone and manner underwent instant change.

"Is this Lieutenant Forrest?"

"It is Lieutenant Forrest; and I have this to say to you here and now. You came here to bring shame and distress on an honest girl,—you, an old soldier and an Irishman,—the first soldier and the first Irishman I ever knew to be guilty of so low and contemptible a piece of persecution. When I write to Major Cranston of this, and when I tell McGrath——"

"Don't be hard on me, lieutenant. I meant no harm to the lady at all. Sure the bill's been unpaid ever since October. I tuk it to the house—I thought mebbe she could inflooence Mart, but I'd never have come here wid it at all, sorr, but—but——" And his troubled eyes wandered now to where Elmendorf stood, biting his nails and watching a chance to speak.

"But what, Donnelly? Who put you up to such a dirty piece of business?"

"Permit me. Nothing dirty was intended for a minute, if I may be allowed to speak," said Elmendorf, as he came forward. "As a friend of all parties concerned, for I know Mr. Wallen well and have remarked his bibulous propensities with distress, I merely suggested to Mr. Donnelly that perhaps if he could get Miss Wallen's ear he might possibly induce her to exercise a restraining influence upon her brother. I thought it best that she should know how and where he was spending so much money *in esse* as well as money *in posse.* That Mr. Donnelly should have misconstrued my well-meant words into——"

"Oh, sure ye told me to show this bill when everybody could see it, sorr, and that would take the starch out av her."

"Settle it between you, gentlemen," said Mr. Forrest, turning contemptuously away. "I have heard more than enough."

"I will see you about this later this evening," said Elmendorf, as the lieutenant disappeared within the sanctum, slamming the door after him and vouchsafing no answer.

That evening Wells's letters seemed interminable. It was nearly half-past six when he finished dictating, and with aching heart and burning face Miss Wallen closed her desk and silently went for her cloak and overshoes. For over half an hour Mr. Forrest had stood

to his guns across the room, making much pretence of being busy with the atlas and his notes, but time and again his eyes wandered, following his thoughts, to the other two,—Wells rapidly dictating, his stenographer with bowed head, determinedly wielding her pencil. When Wells finally started, the lieutenant arose and strolled out with him, closing the door behind them. "I shall see Miss Wallen home," said he, in low tone. "She's had more than enough indignity for one day."

"I'd do it if you couldn't, Mr. Forrest, even though they're waiting for me at home. That girl's a lady, by Jupiter! You've no idea how she's studied and developed ever since she's been here; and it's a damned outrage that such fellows should be allowed to annoy her."

"Such fellows won't, another time," said Forrest, quietly. "Elmendorf was back of this, for some reason that I mean to fathom."

"That's all very well as far as the Irishman's concerned, Mr. Forrest,—he's had his fill,—but look out for that other. I'm no judge of character, now, if he isn't a snake."

When Forrest re-entered the room Miss Wallen had turned out the electric lights over her desk and was standing by the window, her face bowed in her thin, white hands. Forrest's overcoat and hat always hung in the closet without. He had gone with Wells, closing the door. She was, as she supposed, at last alone, and the reaction had come. All the weary months of work, work, work, all the patient slaving to provide for the improvident, all the brave, cheery, hopeful, uncomplaining days of honest toil and honest effort, only to end in such a scene of shame and mortification as this! What could Mr. Wells think of his secretary, chased to her desk with the liquor-bills of her kindred! What would not Mr. Forrest think! A weaker woman would have found refuge and comfort in a passion of tears, but her eyes seemed burning. Leaning against the open casement, she stood there fairly quivering with wrath and the sense of indignity and wrong. She, too, had recognized Elmendorf's nasal whine in the anteroom, and felt well assured that he was in some way responsible for Donnelly's action. Mart had had much to say of late of the foreigner's convincing logic and thrillingly eloquent appeals to the workingman. *There* was the man to wring the neck of capital and bring the bloated bond-holders to terms, said he. Mart never missed a meeting where Elmendorf was to speak, and had more than once been brought home, fuddled, in the cab which conveyed the agitator back to the scene of his labors in the Allison homestead. The cab was paid for by the Union, and Elmendorf didn't mind having it wait outside while he assisted Mart within and stopped to condole with Mrs. Wallen the elder, or Mrs. Wallen junior, and to inquire significantly, if he did not see her, where Miss Wallen was; he always supposed the library closed at nine o'clock, and was not aware, he said, that anybody except the janitor was permitted to remain there later. He knew very well that the librarian was sometimes there until nearly midnight. He knew well that it was there and in the evenings, mainly, that Miss Wallen worked at the transcript of Forrest's reports. "At least," as he said to himself and suggested to others, "that is the *ostensible* purpose of her frequently prolonged

visits." He often walked by the lighted windows of the sanctum and occasionally slipped into the dark hall-way, so the watchman later said. The same irrepressible propensity to meddle in the affairs of everybody in the household where he was employed, in the councils of the various labor unions, in the meetings of political associations, in the official duties or off-hand chats of the men at military head-quarters, in the management of the Lambert Library, seemed to follow him in his casual intercourse with this obscure little household. One night when towards ten o'clock Miss Wallen came blithely down the corridor stairs, she was surprised to find the tutor awaiting her. "As I know Mr. Forrest to be otherwise engaged to-night, Miss Wallen, I have ventured to offer my services as escort," said he, and, though she shrank from and could not bear him, there was no reason at that time for denying him; but when he presently began talking of Forrest in his suggestive, insinuating way, and excusing his references to the lieutenant on the ground of his extreme regard for her widowed mother, her impoverished but amiable relatives, and her own refined, intellectual, and accomplished self, she shrank still more and strove to silence him,—a difficult matter. She had, however, a trait that proved simply exasperating to a man of Elmendorf's calibre,—a faculty of listening in absolute silence where she did not desire to confirm or approve,—and when he had spent much breath and nearly half an hour in descanting upon his impressions of the demoralizing tendencies of military associations in general and of idle officers in particular, it rasped him to find that she did not seem to consider his views worthy the faintest comment; nor would she nor did she invite him in. When her mother reproved her for this, Miss Wallen smiled, and said, "Next time I will, and then you might ask him for the three weeks' lodging he hasn't paid," and Mart said she ought to be ashamed of speaking so of a man who had done everything for her. She'd never have got that library place at all if it hadn't been for Elmendorf, no matter what her fine friends might have told her. Oh, Mart knew all about it; needn't try to pull the wool over his eyes! Another time had Elmendorf come, and again had he talked more of what he had done for her and the rights it gave him to tender her counsel, and this time his references to Forrest took a graver form and became offensive. It was then, indignant, she refused to hear more of it, and that night Elmendorf went away gritting his teeth, and now had come this contemptible essay to humiliate her before her employer. Oh, it was cowardly! shameful! She threw up her arms, clinching her little white hands and stamping as slender a foot as ever walked in a machine-made shoe, and then, ejaculating, as women will in moments of supreme exasperation, "If I were only a man!" whirled about and beheld one.

"In your present mood," said Mr. Forrest, quietly, "I am rather glad you are not, especially as what I have to say refers to you rather in your capacity as 'the clever woman of the family.' Did you ever read an English book of that title?" And then in the most matter-of-fact way in the world he proceeded to assist her into the heavy winter cloak he had lifted from its accustomed peg. "No, of course you haven't," he went on, chatting unconcernedly, and well knowing

she was too overwrought to talk at all; "a girl who works from morning till late at night has little chance to read anything beyond stenographic notes and hideous hieroglyphics—mine, for instance. Now, this sensible head-gear, if you please—— How can a woman wear a hat in winter? Yes, it's on quite straight,—quite as straight as though you had a glass in front of you. Now the overshoes. No, pardon me, Miss Wallen, you're not going to put them on yourself. Sit down, if you please, or stand, if you don't." And down he dropped on one knee and in a trice had stowed away the thin, worn little boots, with their frayed button-holes, within the warm yet clumsy Arctics. "You are sensible to wear such things as these," he said. "The snow is falling heavily, and I mean to walk you home to-night. Now the gloves.—Yes, you may have your own way there, as I shouldn't know how." And, so saying, he seemed calmly to have taken possession of the hitherto self-willed and independent young woman, who for the first time in her life began to realize how much sweetness there was, after all, in having some one to do something for one, instead of being expected to do everything for every one else. She submitted silently to be led forth into the cool, fresh evening air, and then when he as calmly took her hand and placed it within his arm she made no move to withdraw it, neither did she seem to know how by means of it to lean upon his strength. Passively she let it lie, and, walking by his side, turned her face to the drifting snow-flakes and cared not that the night was raw and chill, the lake wind blustering.

For a moment more Forrest did not speak. He glanced keenly up the dim avenue, holding his head very high, as was his way, and himself very erect. Already the sting and shame of her recent experience seemed fading in Jenny's past. There was something so new, strange, sweet, in this masterful assumption on his part of all control and command, there was something so complete in her faith in him, something so like girlish admiration if not hero-worship surging up in the throbbing little heart beneath that worn old winter cloak, that much of her old bright, buoyant, merry self came back to her. "If I can't be a man," said she to herself, "I'm the next thing to one, if there ever was one," and then was amazed at her own impulse to peer up into his grave, soldierly face and aghast to find herself drawing closer to his side. In the suddenness and alarm of this revelation she nearly jumped beyond arm's length, and he felt constrained to retake her hand and draw it farther through his arm.

"You will find it easier if you will let me bear a little of the weight to-night," said he, gravely, "and that is why I have made it my business to intrude upon your time and attention. Miss Wallen, will you kindly tell me what claim your brother has upon you?"

"He *is* my brother and out of work," she answered, simply.

"Can't he get work?"

"He says he can't."

"What can he do?"

"He writes well, and he had a clerkship, but Mart was—unsteady, and he lost it. Then he got a place in the freight-yards, but there was a strike, and he went out. They wouldn't take him back then

because he was so foolish in his talk; and they can't take him now, for hundreds of better men, steadier men, old employees, have been laid off. Ever since the World's Fair business has been falling away."

"And you have had not only that house and your mother to care for, but an able-bodied brother?"

Jenny drooped her head. Able-bodied brother, indeed!—with wife, babies, debts, duns, and all! She had borne the weight of the whole establishment upon her fragile shoulders; but that wasn't a thing to speak of to him,—to anybody. Her silence touched him.

"Do you mean that out of your little salary you have paid that house-rent and all the expenses and your mother's and his too?"

No answer.

"I wish you would tell me," he said, in such grave, courteous tones that they went to her heart. "I beg you not to think me intrusive. I have never heard of such a case before. Why, Miss Wallen, I'm appalled when I see how thoughtless I have been. You simply cannot afford the time to work for me at the price you fixed."

"It pays better than mending Mart's clothes, etc., at home," said she, whimsically; "very much better than anything I can get to do up town."

"Good heavens! cannot your mother mend Mart's clothes? Can't he mend them himself? My—my—poor little friend, I had no idea matters were as bad as this!"

He had no idea even now how bad matters were, nor did she care to edify him. "Why, Mr. Forrest," said she, "when I look around me this winter and see all the want and suffering on every side—the absolute destitution in places—I think my fortune regal. I only wish all the girls I know of were half as well-to-do."

Forrest drew a long breath. "Well, of all the incarnations of pluck and cheerfulness I ever heard of, commend me to this," thought he. They were within two squares of home, and at the corner was a large family grocery store. She faltered now. "I'm very much obliged to you for coming with me so far, and—I have to stop here."

"But only to make some purchases. You are going on to tea, and I have something I want to say."

"I may have to wait, and you have your engagements."

"Nothing in the world but to dine, *solus*, at the Virginia, and my appetite's about gone. I mean to wait, Miss Wallen."

Miss Wallen flushed, but made no further remonstrance. Entering the store, she gave her orders. Some little packages of tea and sugar were speedily ready. In the window were some pyramids of Florida oranges, rich and luscious fruit. Watching her with uncontrollable interest, he saw her eyes glancing towards them, saw and knew the question framed by her soft lips, saw and realized what was passing as the salesman answered and she shook her head. Turning to another clerk, he pencilled a number on a card he handed him and gave some orders of his own. Presently she stored her change in the little porte-monnaie and picked up her bundles. Promptly he relieved her of them, and again as they came forth he tendered his arm. The side street into which they turned was darker than the broad avenue.

The houses were poor and cheap, the gas-lamps few and far between. Silently now they walked rapidly along, for he was deep in thought. He longed to find some way of opening the subject uppermost in his mind, but knew not how. At last he spoke:

"Miss Wallen, where and how can I see your brother? I've an idea of a place he might fill. He is unmarried, I presume?"

Silence a moment. "No. Mart has a wife."

"A wife? Where is she? What does she do?"

"She isn't strong, and can't do much of anything."

"Not even mend his clothes, or stop—— How about children?"

"You know the old adage," said she, with a quiet smile, "and Mart is a poor man."

"And they, too, are your care—you their support—and—this has been going on since last year?"

"Oh, no; Mart gets odd jobs now and then."

"The proceeds of which he spends in—— But I entreat your pardon, my—my friend. This is beyond anything I ever dreamed of; and—don't come to the library to-night, please. There's no hurry about those pages; to-morrow night will be better."

They were at the little gateway now, and he released her arm. Over-against them on the opposite side of the street two men, skulking back in the shadows of a dark entrance-way, edged a little farther forward, watched him as he restored the bundles, watched him as he took again her hand, then lifted his hat and bowed over it as he might have done reverence to a queen, watched her as she tripped within-doors, and then Forrest again as he slowly turned and walked thoughtfully away.

"That's the man, then?" asked, in low, cautious, querulous tone, the shorter, slighter of the two.

"That's him—damn him! I can feel his kick to this day."

"And it was with him—in his rooms—she took refuge? you could swear to it?"

"'Course I could, on a stack of Bibles."

And this was early in the week of Mr. Elmendorf's conversation with Aunt Lawrence, only forty-eight hours prior to the sudden orders which prevented Mr. Forrest's dining at the Allisons' and escorting Miss Florence to the opera, and which hurried him miles away on a mission whereof only two other men at head-quarters knew the purport,—the general and his chief of staff. There was good reason for the aides-de-camp and "understrappers," as Elmendorf referred to them, being even more mysterious than usual.

CHAPTER VIII.

THERE was a month or more during the late winter in which Mr. Elmendorf, cold-shouldered out of official society at department head-quarters, became quite the managing director of the Allison mansion. John Allison, with a party of fellow-magnates, was on a long tour of inspection over the southernmost of the transcontinental lines, and,

finding home life a trifle uncongenial just now, owing to some discussions with Aunt Lawrence, finding, too, that the wives and daughters of other magnates were to accompany them on the trip, sojourning days at a time in many of the charming resorts among the mountains or along the Pacific seaboard, Miss Allison eagerly accepted their invitation to be one of the party. Mrs. Lawrence was to remain in charge at home, and was permitted to send for and receive under her wing her own graceless duckling, with the distinct understanding that he was in no wise to be allowed to interfere with Cary's studies or duties. Allison "had no use," as he expressed it, for his nephew Lawrence. He had helped pull the cub through many a scrape, but had tired of it, and, having secured him a place in an Eastern office where he had enough to live on and little to do, desired to wash his hands of him in future; but mother-love watches over even the renegades from the home circle, and Mrs. Lawrence persuaded Brother John that Herbert's health was failing and that he sorely needed change and rest and coddling. The brother growled out something cynical about Chicago as a winter resort, but told her to go ahead. The party left in early February, and about the last thing before going Allison had another conference with Elmendorf. The latter had received warning that, unless he gave more time to the instruction of his pupil and less to that of the populace, the engagement would terminate. Elmendorf argued, and Allison cut him short. "I have listened to this for over eight months, and am further from conviction than ever, Mr. Elmendorf," said he. "So waste no more eloquence on me. Take your choice between serving me on salary or writing 'screamers' and speeches for nothing. You've done no great harm outside as yet, but there is a growing tendency to disorder that such counsels as yours will only serve to stimulate." A blunt man was Allison, and furnished excellent text for Elmendorf's article on The Brutality of Capital, which presently appeared, but over a very different *nom de plume*, in the columns of the socialistic press. Elmendorf agreed that of course, as his employer took such extreme views of the case, he must perforce acquiesce in the decision. He agreed not to appear on the platform or write any more leaders so long as he should remain in John Allison's employ, and then, when Allison was well beyond range, interpreted the agreement to suit himself.

As a means of increasing his influence over the mother, Elmendorf made himself useful and agreeable to young Lawrence when he came. The lessons went on with fair regularity, Cary and his tutor occupying their study each day until luncheon-time, and again, occasionally, later in the afternoon or evening. But, while he no longer appeared on the stage or rostrum as one of the leading speakers of the evening, the eloquent gentleman was pretty sure to be heard from the body of the house or the midst of the audience at the various meetings held from time to time in what were referred to as "the disturbed districts." There was a familiar ring about many of the articles that appeared in the papers, but they were no longer fulminated over his name or initials. For several weeks no more dinner-parties were given at the Allisons', and few officers called there. Then the general commanding

went off on a tour of inspection, taking a brace of aides with him, and these were Forrest's friends and associates and the men who least liked the tutor. But while Elmendorf had ceased to spend some time each afternoon in the offices adjoining the general's sanctum, picking up all stray items of military news and haranguing such men as would listen, his was by no means an unfamiliar figure about the great building. True to his policy, he had made acquaintance among the clerks, messengers, etc., first appearing among them as an associate and friend of their superior officers, thereby commanding, as it were, their respectful attention, and then, after studying their personal characteristics, little by little establishing confidential relations. Simple-minded, straightforward fellows, as a rule, were these soldier clerks, men who lived in a groove and knew little of the wiles of the outer world. A few there were of the decayed gentleman stamp, and other few of the bibulous. Through their hands passed much of the correspondence, in their keeping were many of the secrets, of the official life of the far-spreading department, and Elmendorf saw his opportunity. It was no difficult matter to assert in his confidential chats, conducted only when and where their superiors could get no wind of them, that he had been told by his friend the adjutant-general or by Captain and Aide-de-Camp So-and-so all about the matter in question, and all he asked was some little item of corroborative detail. Now, there were days, as the winter wore away, when sundry things had happened within the limits of the general's command which the news-gatherers of the Chicago press, always sensational, were eager to exploit, not so much, perhaps, as they actually occurred, but as the management and direction of each paper desired to make it appear they had. The reporters sounded many a possible source of information without avail, for the chief of staff had cautioned his clerks and subordinates. Great were his surprise and disgust, therefore, to find the columns suddenly blossoming out with glowing particulars of matters he had supposed discreetly hidden. The reports were by no means truthful,—they were even more than customarily colored and exaggerated,—but there was the foundation of fact in more than one. Next it began to be noted that Elmendorf, hitherto a contributor only to papers of the socialistic stamp, was frequently to be seen hobnobbing with the reporters of the prominent journals. Now, these gentlemen, as a rule, are shrewd judges of human nature and quick to determine between the gold and the glitter, between the actual possessor of important news and the mere pretender; but there was another period of a month or six weeks in which Elmendorf was sought and followed almost as eagerly as the adjutant-general himself. Never, perhaps, in his varied life had the graduate of Jena rolled in sweeter clover than during the months of the late winter and early spring of '94. An oracle at the table in a luxurious home, with no one to dispute his sway and no one actually to disapprove, unless it were his much disgusted but helpless pupil, with access to public offices and public libraries, with occasional touch with officials who might and did dislike but could not actually snub him, with occasional driblets of information to supply foundation and a vivid imagination to do the rest, he found himself an object of

interest to the men of all others whom he most desired to influence,—the reporters of the daily press. Elmendorf was never in higher feather. He was even able to neglect for a time the clamors of his erstwhile hearers, his suffering brethren among the sons of toil.

And he had been managing matters at home with rare diplomacy, too. Mrs. Lawrence was mad to find out just exactly what peccadillo had brought about Mr. Floyd Forrest's sudden relief from duty at Chicago and orders to proceed to the frontier; but this was a subject on which the tutor was now decidedly coy. He had given Mrs. Lawrence to understand that because of some scandal and to prevent further talk the officer had been summarily sent away. Finding that none of the officers knew what had brought about the order, he worked among the clerks,—who knew nothing at all. One of these latter lived not far from the Lambert Library, was a tippler at times, and had a grievance. Forrest had twice come upon him when he was boisterously drunk, and, recognizing him, had given him warning. Forrest was only a "casual" at head-quarters, said the clerk, and when a fellow was off duty what he did "was none of Forrest's damned business." Elmendorf found he didn't know what had brought about Forrest's relief, and so proceeded to ask him if he'd ever heard this and that,—which the man had not, but was glad to hear now. Later, Elmendorf made him acquainted, one cold evening, at a comfortable groggery not too far from the Allison house, with a young fellow who could and did tell how he had followed a girl whom he suspected and saw her go to Forrest's lodgings. That he made no mention of certain concomitant facts, such as his being kicked into the gutter by the lieutenant and the girl's being a total stranger to that officer at that time, was due perhaps to native modesty and possibly to Elmendorf's editorial skill. What Elmendorf wanted to create at head-quarters was the belief that it was for some such indiscretion that Forrest was exiled, well reasoning that then the entire establishment would suddenly bethink itself of all manner of suspicious circumstances that it had thought nothing of before.

He planned equally well at home. Miss Allison knew only that Forrest was ordered away on duty for an indefinite time, and speedily went away herself on the jaunt to the Pacific. Mrs. Lawrence, who longed to say something to her niece upon the subject, was cautioned by Elmendorf to say nothing at all until he could place her in possession of all the facts, which he promised shortly to do. He felt somehow that if Allison ever consulted Forrest as to the propriety of further employing him, the days of tutorship and ease were ended; but Forrest was gone, with a stab in the back, and gone probably not to return. Allison's stay promised to be prolonged until mid-April, possibly May. Miss Wallen, bending over her task at the Lambert Library, mutely avoided, and Wells openly scowled at, Elmendorf whenever he sauntered into the rooms where once he was welcome. So again he took an interest in Mart and his meanderings. Mart had steadied a bit, had a job over among the lumber-yards on the north branch, and had been keeping away from the meetings on the west side; but it wasn't a fortnight before Mart was staying out late at night again and coming home

without his wits or wages Sunday mornings and denouncing his employers as scoundrels and some new men as scabs. The next thing poor Jenny knew, Mart's unpaid bills were coming to her again, and the brother had lost his situation a third time. There was no extra work now to add to her earnings, no strong, manly, courteous, thoughtful fellow to help her into her cloak and out of her troubles. The days lengthened, and so did the faces at home; so would the bills have done had she ever yielded to the importunities of her Mrs.-Nickleby-like mother or Mart's weakling of a wife; but Jenny was Spartan in self-denial; what she couldn't pay for on the spot she wouldn't have.

More and more, however, she recognized in Elmendorf the evil genius of the family, and implored Mart to have no more to do with him, whereat Mart laughed wildly. "Just you wait a bit, missy," he declaimed. "The day is coming when capitalists and corporations will bow down to him as they have to the Goulds and Vanderbilts in the past. I tell you, in less than two months, if they don't come to our terms, if they refuse to listen to our dictation not one wheel will turn from one end of this country to the other. We'll tie up the business of the whole United States, by God! That's what'll happen to capital."

"And then what will happen to us, Mart,—to you, your wife and babies,—to your mother and to me? Where will the money come from?"

"Oh, there's money enough—more than enough—millions more than enough—to feed and clothe and keep us all in luxury—tied up in the coffers of those bond-holders, and when the men whose hands have made it get their hands once more on it——"

"Mart, Mart, your head is crazed with whiskey," laughed Jenny, sadly. "No wonder capital is being withdrawn from us; no wonder the gold is going back to Europe. People who have it dare not invest in communities where the employees are allowed to talk as they are here. If I had a million to invest, do you think I'd venture it where the workmen openly threatened they'd stop every wheel throughout the land? You are killing your own prospects, Mart, simply to cripple theirs."

"I don't care. What do you know of such things, anyhow? I don't mean to stand by and see my brothers starving and swindled day by day down there at Pullman."

"Who have the greater claims, Mart, those whom you call your brothers down there at Pullman, or your wife and children here at home? I feel for those people just as much as you do,—more, probably,—but your duty lies here."

"Oh, that's right. Stand by your swell friends, and toss it into my teeth that I and mine are sponging on you for a living, and you want your money. Make a man more desperate than he is by your nagging and fault-finding. Drive a fellow to striking one minute and then torment him with accusations the next. I tell you if it comes to riot and bloodshed here, it's—it's just women like you—that'll—that'll have brought it all about."

But this was a statement so absurd that Jenny turned away in

speechless indignation. What was the use of logic or argument with one of her brother's mental make-up? Leaving Mart to go on with his harangue and confirm the mother and his wife in their view of her utter lack of appreciation of her brother's noble nature, the girl walked wearily away to her desk at the library. It was barely eight o'clock, and her duties began only at nine, but she was an early bird, this New World Little Dorrit, and loved to be promptly at her work, and the janitor and scrub-women often listened to her cheery song as she plied the duster among the shelves and desks of the sanctum. Wells, perhaps, never noticed how much neater everything looked since Miss Wallen took charge, but she was a dainty creature, in whose eyes dusty books and littered desks were abominations. Mrs. Wells, however, was not so blind. "That girl's worth two of Miss Stockton," was the lady's verdict, and then, noting with self-comforting criticism the inexpensive material of Jenny's gown, the absence of all attempt at ornamentation, as well, alas! as of her predecessor's brilliancy of color and clearness of skin, she added, conclusively, "and she isn't pretty."

And these raw blustering days of late winter and early spring—or something—had left their mark upon poor Jenny's grave and gentle face. The circles seemed purpler and deeper under the soft dark eyes. There was even less of color in the pallid skin. There was something languid, almost droopy, in her carriage now. She had fought her fight without repining or complaint all the long months through, and knew, alas! that she was only losing ground. A year agone she looked forward with joy to this position, and now she was loaded with even heavier cares and burdens. She had found some outside work, but everything she made was rapidly swallowed up by her home cormorants. "It would be just the same, perhaps, if I had five hundred dollars a month," said Jenny. She was blue, disheartened, and discouraged,—perhaps a little weak,—as she walked rapidly on. She thought a sight of the foam-crested waves might stir her sluggish blood, and so sped eastward a block or two and out upon the lake front. Passing the Allison homestead south of the Park, she saw the family carriage just rolling away,—not the open barouche that had once so nearly run her down, but the heavy, closed carriage. She knew the coachman and the handsome bays at a glance. A few blocks farther south she again turned westward to resume her way to the library, and came suddenly upon two men standing in close conversation. One was haranguing the other, speaking in nasal, querulous, unmistakable tones, and the speaker's back was towards her. Overcome by a sudden sense of repulsion, she hesitated, stopped, and was about to turn back and cross the street, when the listening party glanced up, saw the girl as she halted and seemed to be watching them, and, all in an instant, turned and sneaked, or rather lurched, up the street. Miss Wallen knew that gait in an instant. There was the ruffian who had chased her and seized her that never-to-be-forgotten night.

And here, turning about now and facing her, was Elmendorf.

For an instant the tutor's *aplomb* was gone. He stammered as he raised his hat and bade her good-morning. "I was just giving some

advice to a poor devil who accosted me for alms, Miss Wallen," he said, lamely, "but I seem to have driven him off. My speeches are not universally well received, as you probably know."

But Jenny was in no mood for conversation. With but scant recognition, she pushed rapidly on, and Elmendorf followed.

"There is a matter I much desire to speak about," said he, placing himself at her side. "I'm aware I have not the good fortune to stand well in Miss Wallen's opinion," he added, with a half-sneer, "and a man more vindictive and less devoted to principle would have felt like resenting the—the slights you have seen fit to put upon me. I shall observe your prohibition with regard to the—alleged officer and gentleman of whom I had occasion to speak to you, since his superiors have taken that responsibility off my hands by summarily sending him away, and as it is not likely that he will ever cross your path in this neighborhood again,—a matter in which I find sincere cause for rejoicing, for of all men I have ever met he seemed to me the least worthy of such confidence as you placed in him——"

"Is this observing my prohibition, Mr. Elmendorf?" said Jenny, stopping and facing him.

"Oh, well, possibly not."

"Then you will kindly say at once what your business is. I have told you I will not listen to anything you say about Mr. Forrest."

"I am detaining you here," he said, evasively. "Let us walk on."

"No, I will not walk on. Mr. Elmendorf, I have learned to look upon you as anything but a friend to me or mine, and I mean to be perfectly frank with you here and now. You have slandered my friend, you have tricked and misled my brother, you have deceived my mother, and I know well you have sought to injure me with my employer——"

"Oh, only so far as was justifiable in the protection of my own name. As your recommender and endorser for the position you hold, I had a right, when you showed yourself heedless of my counsel and defiant of my injunctions, to say to your immediate superior that he should be cautious about allowing your intimacy with Mr. Forrest to be prosecuted within the shelter of his sanctum and practically under his own nose. I——"

"That's quite enough, Mr. Elmendorf. You have added insult to injury. Once and for all, let there be an end of this. I decline any and all communication with you from this time on." And with cheeks that lacked no color now, and eyes all ablaze with wrath, Miss Wallen turned and left him. But Elmendorf pursued. He had one arrow left, and meant to send it home.

"At least I may accompany you to the corner, only twenty yards away, and there, as you suggest, our paths shall separate. You decline to believe my estimate of Mr. Forrest, and hold him up as something knightly and chivalric, forsooth. My deluded friend, all the time he was making you the object of those charming little attentions he was pressing his suit under my own eyes at home, and, in spite of all her father, her aunt, or her friends could do, I regret to say that Miss Florence Allison became so infatuated as to follow that young man to

his exile, and should he ever return here it will doubtless be as her husband. Good-morning, Miss Wallen."

She had turned from him in renewed anger and disgust as they reached the corner, had hastened along with flaming eyes and cheeks and loudly throbbing heart. She was furious at him for daring to speak of such things, daring to couple Forrest's name with hers, with —anybody's. She was ready to cry out against the man for such malignity—mendacity; and then her cooler judgment and common sense began to reassert themselves. Why shouldn't it be true? Why shouldn't he seek the hand of one so—so lovely and wealthy as Miss Allison? What more natural than that Miss Allison should learn to love him? Why shouldn't she—she, Jenny Wallen—rejoice with her whole heart that her friend and protector could look forward to such happiness? He had never been anything but kind, thoughtful, courteous, to her. Other men had taken advantage of her defenceless post to accost her with low gallantries, with *bourgeois* flattery, with ridiculous attempts at flirtation or love-making, and she had laughed or stormed them off; but Forrest had shown her from the first the high-bred courtesy he would have accorded the proudest lady in the land, had never presumed upon a look, a word, a touch, that was not marked by respect and deference. He was a gentleman, she said; any girl might be proud of such a lover; and if it was true that he and Florence Allison were engaged, she would congratulate him and her with all her heart and rejoice with them and for them, and pray that their lives might be happy,—happy as her own was desolate,—and then the day became dark and dull and hopeless despite a brilliant sun, for just as the Lambert towers loomed in sight, the Allison carriage came spinning up the avenue, a radiant, happy, lovely face beaming upon her from the window, then turning to look up into the dark, soldierly features of the man at her side. Florence Allison was home, then, from her wanderings, bringing her beloved with her.

CHAPTER IX.

Elmendorf was an astonished man. He had confidently told Mrs. Lawrence that the objectionable lieutenant had been ordered off under a cloud of official censure and forbidden to return. He really believed it. It was one of his peculiarities that he invariably attached a sinister explanation to every action of his fellow men and women whose social station, at least, was superior to his own, when other explanation was withheld. He had sneeringly told Miss Wallen that unless the gentleman resigned from the army and returned to be the husband of Miss Allison, he would not return at all. He believed this too. He was so constituted mentally that he believed Forrest guilty of anything that could be alleged against him, believed that Miss Allison was interested in him to a certain extent, but would probably lose her interest when once the gallant himself was well out of the way, believed that he could even convince her, as he had convinced her aunt, that Forrest was totally unworthy her regard, provided Forrest himself

did not return; and, lo and behold! Forrest had returned, and returned with Miss Allison herself, brought back on their train,—in their carriage, as he learned from Aunt Lawrence,—and apparently more influential with the father and daughter than ever before. Not until luncheon-time that day did he know of this, and the news came like a dash of ice-water on shivering skin. It was plain that Mrs. Lawrence looked to him to defend his statement and name his authorities then and there; for Miss Allison did not come down to luncheon, Cary was speedily excused and permitted to go about his own affairs, and then Mrs. Lawrence whirled upon the tutor with the tidings that not only was Mr. Forrest back, but that Florence had brought him back; that Mr. Allison, so far from objecting, had approved,—had invited him to lunch with his fellow-magnates at the club and to dine *en famille* in the evening. As for Mr. Forrest being under the ban of official censure, Mrs. Lawrence declared she couldn't understand it, in view of the fact that he was with the general and his staff when the party encountered them at Wichita, and that the general himself had authorized his return to Chicago. "Authorized!" said Elmendorf, with his ready sneer; "*ordered*, very probably, with the view of having him tried by court-martial here where the witnesses are ready; and Mr. Forrest has had the effrontery to saddle himself on respectable company by way of establishing high connection to start with. I have heard of just such expedients before. My informants are men who thoroughly know the ins and outs of military affairs in the department, and they are not likely to be mistaken." All the same the tutor was glad to get away and to go post-haste to the Pullman building, hoping to catch his one intimate in the clerical force and to dodge the officials with whom he stood in evil odor. Luck often follows audacity. In the elevator he met two officers to whom he had been presented during the earlier days of his tutorship, when he was still cordially received. These gentlemen had been away on duty in the interim, and, knowing nothing of his lapse from grace, greeted him as pleasantly as ever, invited him into the aide-de-camps' offices, and there made him at home in the absence of the usual occupants. They knew nothing of Forrest's movements beyond the fact that he had not been with his regiment at all. One of the two was Major Cranston; the other was Lieutenant-Colonel Kenyon, of Forrest's own regiment. "I suppose you know he—left here under very sudden—rather summary orders some two months ago," suggested Elmendorf; "and it created, as you can readily imagine, some little comment in society." No, Kenyon hadn't heard, and he eyed the speaker sharply from under his bushy, overhanging brows. Cranston, however, promptly replied that there was nothing in the least remarkable in it. Officers were frequently hurried off on sudden orders, and there was no reason why society should be exercised over it. Elmendorf promptly disavowed any intention of casting the faintest aspersion on Mr. Forrest, whom he at least had found to be certainly quite the equal of his comrades in most things pertaining to the officer and gentleman, although there were some things, perhaps, which to a humble civilian like himself might call for explanation. He was merely stating a fact, one which

he regretted, of course, as he did all the idle talk that circulated in superficial circles of society. He was glad to find officers of such prominence as Kenyon and Cranston so ready to stand up for Forrest, as some men—he preferred not to mention names—had been less outspoken, at least, in his behalf. And then Kenyon impatiently arose and went out, Cranston met a brace of cavalrymen going back to their regiment after a leave, and Elmendorf drifted away in search of his clerk, and found him.

A glance at the register showed that Forrest had already been in to report his arrival, had given his old rooms as his present address, and "verbal instructions of Dept. Comdr." as the explanation of his return. The adjutant-general, seated in his own office, had seen Forrest, and had further instructions to communicate, evidently, for they had been closeted together nearly half an hour, but what passed between them the clerk could not say, and Elmendorf was left to his own vivid imagination. Forrest certainly had not rejoined his regiment, and Elmendorf had chosen to think that that was what he was ordered to do when leaving Chicago. Thinking of it so much, he had come to believe it a fact; but Forrest was now back here in Chicago, as suddenly and mysteriously as he went. He was not, however, back in his old office, was not then restored to his functions at head-quarters. What more was needed, therefore, to warrant the belief that he was picked up by the general in his wanderings in the Indian Territory and sent in for trial on charges of disobedience of orders and absence without leave? At all events, it was a working theory in the absence of any other. Elmendorf strolled away discontentedly, and was presently overhauling books on Brentano's counters, and there Cranston found him, and, when books were the theme, found him more to his liking. They walked up to Cranston's old home that afternoon together, and Elmendorf, as previously detailed, made his first appearance before Mrs. Sergeant McGrath.

Later he strolled up to the Lambert Memorial, revolving many things in his mind. With all the discomfort and uneasiness and foreboding Forrest's sudden reappearance cost him, with all the embarrassment likely to follow, one reflection had given him joy. There at least within those walls was a proud and wilful girl whose spirit he had longed to tame, whose distrust and defiance he had smarted under, but who now would have to admit the truth of some of the most salient of his accusations and prophecies with regard to Forrest. There was still abundant opportunity for him to rejoice in that triumph. Wells did not like him, but what of that? Wells was probably gone by this time, and she would be there all alone, bending as usual over her typewriter. She couldn't order him out or refuse him admittance, since Wells had never yet done so. She would have to listen, and he would go and break to her the news of Forrest's return,—of Forrest's return with Florence Allison, of his luncheon with the magnates at the club to-day, of his coming to dinner informally, like one of the family, at the Allisons' to-night. It would be comfort to watch her sensitive face, thought Elmendorf, and he meant to make the successive announcements as humorous and lingering as his command of rhetoric would

permit. His step was light, his smile significant, his bearing quite debonair, as he turned into the private hall-way and encountered the janitor at the first turn. The janitor was Irish. "Misther Wells is gone—if it's him ye want, sorr," said he, with scant civility, for the Celt had become imbued with distaste for the Teuton.

"Then I'll see his secretary," answered Elmendorf, with his usual shrug, and without a stop.

"Ye wouldn't, bedad, if I saw her first," said honest Maloney, as he looked after the agitator. "Maneness goes wid the loikes of him, and mischief and trouble wherever he sets his fut."

Springily did Elmendorf go up the echoing stairway, and then, reaching the second floor, he saw fit to saunter, and that, too, with noiseless footfall. He approached the familiar door-way, and the ante-room—the scene of his discomfiture when Donnelly presented Mart's liquor-bill—stood invitingly open. But the door to the private office beyond was closed, and it was barely five o'clock. She was there; he felt assured of that. He could hear the busy clicking of the typewriter. She was probably alone, too. Hitherto he had entered unannounced, but then the door stood open. Why should he knock now? He would not. He decided to enter as hitherto, and so, quietly, turned the knob and pushed.

But the door resisted. Evidently it was latched from within. Twice he made the trial, noiselessly as possible, and then paused to consider. This was something new. Miss Wallen had locked herself in, or possibly had locked him out. If not at her desk, she might easily have seen him sauntering leisurely up the street, might have seen him cross, and, divining that his object was to see her and perhaps renew his offensive talk, have taken prompt measures to resist. Well, even if lettered "Private Office" on the door, it was a public office in point of fact; and that public office was not for personal use or benefit he had the authority, in one sententious form or other, of many an Executive, from Jefferson down. So Elmendorf rapped, and rapped loudly. The clicking presently ceased, a light footstep was heard, then the voice of the official stenographer:

"What is wanted?"

"Open the door, please."

"Whom do you wish to see?"

"I desire to speak with Miss Wallen."

"Miss Wallen declines."

"I have business to transact."

"Mr. Wells is not here, and Miss Wallen is not empowered to act for him. You will have to wait and see him to-morrow."

"Miss Wallen, you are barring me out of an office I have a perfect right to enter, and that I mean to enter here and now, or make formal complaint to the trustees. If this door is not opened in twenty seconds I warn you there will be trouble."

To this remark no answer whatever was vouchsafed. Miss Wallen quietly returned to her typewriter, and the only sound from within was the clicking of that ingenious machine. Elmendorf had sense enough not to shout his news, but he had not sense enough to abandon the

attempt to tell her. There was another way of reaching the sanctum, provided he moved with promptness and decision. It was through the library itself. Turning away, muttering angrily, he returned through the darkening corridor, down the stairs, and around to the main entrance. Another moment, and he was at the lattice that separated the reading-room from the library proper. There, beyond, were the long aisles and rows of crowded shelves. Here was the customary throng of patrons, returning or taking out books. There were the busy attendants bustling to and fro, and beyond them and beyond those vaults and dim recesses was the passage leading to the sanctum of the head librarian. A young girl, standing within the lattice, was noting the numbers of some books upon a slip of card-board, and, with quick decision, Elmendorf addressed her. "Pardon me," said he, "I have to go into Mr. Wells's office at once. Miss Wallen has accidentally locked the door, and can't open it. Will you kindly let me through this way?"

The girl hesitated an instant. It was against orders, but she had often seen the gentleman in the library and in the sanctum itself with the librarian. "I suppose it will be all right," said she, doubtfully.

"Oh, certainly," said Elmendorf. "Pardon my haste; I have left some papers there that I need at once. Ah, thank you." And, slipping through the wicket, he hastened on his way before any one else could interpose, and in another moment stood within the sanctum and closed the door behind him.

Nor was he much surprised to find Miss Wallen no longer at her instrument, but leaning wearily against the casement, apparently gazing out into the street. "You see," he began, with cold, sarcastic emphasis, "the power to lock one door does not make a woman the mistress of an entire situation. It would have been better had you accepted what was meant for your good and spared me the necessity of forcing it upon you, as it were; but I have had my own sisters to protect in the past, and knew what was best for you. Nor am I to be balked in what I consider my duty by the obstinacy of a moonstruck, passion-blinded girl."

She had turned her back upon him as he began to speak. Now she turned and faced him. He half expected fierce denunciation, but, to his surprise, her manner was as contemptuously cool as his was sardonically cold.

"You have succeeded in getting in here on the plea of business, Mr. Elmendorf; but this is insolence."

"It is my business, and has ever been and shall ever be, to stand between the helplessness of the poor and the oppression of the rich. My business is to see that you and yours suffer no wrong at the hands of those who consider such as you their natural prey. I see the ghost of a smile flickering about your lips, Miss Wallen, and am aware you regard my mission with disfavor, but you cannot and shall not treat it with contempt."

She was smiling, poor girl, and it was but the ghost of a wintry smile, too, for, even in her exasperation and distress, the whimsical, humorous side of her nature—its helpful, sunny side—was asserting

itself at the moment. For the life of her she could not feel the indignation he deserved just then, for the contrast between the grandiloquence of his sentiments and the pettiness of that unpaid lodging-bill almost forced her to laugh outright.

"I am here," he went on, "because you would not believe my statements regarding Mr. Forrest, because I feel it my duty to open your eyes as to his character and intentions. You refused to believe what I said concerning him and you, and that only confirms my fears. I am powerless to contend against the logic of a woman's love, but when I spoke of him and her whom I may be pardoned for referring to as your rival, I spoke the truth."

Now she was smiling in contemptuous amusement again, as though she actually considered it beneath her to answer. How amazed would Miss Allison be at the idea of her being placed on the same plane with a working-girl! Her silence and self-control maddened him. "Have you no reason, no sense?" he demanded. "I told you this very day that she had gone to follow and bring him back, did I not?"

A cool nod of assent.

"I told you he would reappear here, if at all, only as her husband, or possibly her affianced, did I not?"

Another nod as cool as the first.

"And you turned away in contemptuous unbelief, did you not?"

"Contempt certainly, but unbelief—not entirely."

Elmendorf was fairly trembling with wrath by this time. The idea that this simple, unlettered, friendless "girl of the people" should so coolly brave him—him on whose words enraptured ears were wont to hang, at whose eloquence enthusiastic hundreds burst into applause! It stung him to the very marrow of his conceit. Something must be said or done to bring her to her knees, and, believing that she loved and dearly loved the man in question, he prepared his final *coup*.

"Well, it may modify your contempt to know that my words have come true."

"That Mr. Forrest was ordered away in disgrace?" she calmly asked.

"Not so much that, as that he has returned, brought back, as I said, by Miss Allison."

"Why, but that is no news at all. I knew he was coming, and I saw them, together, this morning."

"You—saw them—and you knew he was coming?" faltered the tutor. "You mean to—you mean he writes to you,—that you correspond with him?"

"I mean nothing whatsoever beyond what I said, Mr. Elmendorf, —that I knew Mr. Forrest would be here this week, that I saw them this morning; and, as it is his work that lies here unfinished, interrupted by this visitation, I may now, I presume, return to my business —and you to yours."

"Then he has been here, too?"

"Yes, and will be again,—another reason, perhaps, why you would better not linger. I will open the door now,—since it is to let you out."

"Yes, and to let him in, I suppose, and see him behind locked doors, as you doubtless have before, Miss Wallen——"

"The door is both unlocked and open, Mr. Elmendorf," said she, throwing it wide, but now in her turn the girl was quivering with indignation. "Furthermore, one touch on this button brings our janitor here—Mr. Wells speaks of him as 'our bouncer.'" And her white hand poised not six inches from the button.

Elmendorf took a long breath. "You may consider this a moral victory, Miss Wallen," said he, backing to the portal, "but you will do well to remember this. As I have said before, I have a duty to perform that I owe to society,—to my employers on the one hand, to the people on the other. Rest you well assured that whatever may have been his successes, so called, in the past, there are two schemes of your paragon, Mr. Forrest, that shall fail, even if I have to fight him through the public press. In one or other, separately, he may be too much for my efforts, but at one and the same time that accomplished *roué* shall never win a wife in that household and a mistress here."

And immediately thereafter a gentleman coming up the dim corridor without heard a sound that resembled the loud crack of a toy torpedo, followed by the reverberant bang of a door, and, a moment later, encountered an oddly familiar figure hurrying out and hanging on to its left jowl as though afflicted with a violent attack of *tic douloureux*.

"Why, I believe that's Elmendorf!" remarked the new-comer, and then was surprised to find the inner door locked,—to find that he had to knock thrice before it was opened, and by that time it seemed quite dark.

CHAPTER X.

THE dinner at Allison's the night of his return from the long journey was not a success. It was to be an entirely informal affair,—no guests present but a high official of the road in which the host was so heavily interested, and Mr. Forrest, whom Miss Allison had invited on her own account. The brother magnate came, and Mr. Forrest did not. True, his acceptance had been conditioned on his being able to finish certain papers, which, so he told both Florence and her father, would be required at the office early the next day. Mr. Elmendorf came hurrying in and went up to his room about half-past six, and fifteen minutes later came a messenger with a note which was taken at once to Miss Allison's room. She was dressed for dinner and ready to come down, but she took and read it hurriedly, uttered an exclamation of disappointment, and sharply closed her door. Not until Mr. Allison sent for her with the information that dinner was on the table did she appear. Elmendorf eyed her covertly, and Aunt Lawrence sharply. There were unmistakable traces of tears. "Did he say why he couldn't come?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, presently.

"Yes—no—at least—he had told me before that he thought it might be impossible," answered Florence, in embarrassment and annoyance. Her father was laying down the law on Interstate Commerce to

his guest at the moment, and it was a subject on which he never tired. Even while listening intently, watching for his chance to "chip in," as Cary said, Elmendorf caught Miss Allison's every word. What he had not yet been enlightened upon was the explanation of Forrest's return with the party. All he knew was that early on the previous day the general, with two of his aides and Mr. Forrest, boarded the train in Southern Kansas. Allison invited them all into the private car and proposed making them his guests on the homeward run. The chief declined for himself and staff, saying that they had other matters to detain them, but it transpired that Mr. Forrest was to go right on. He had his berth engaged in an adjoining sleeper, but spent several hours with the railway party, and on their arrival in Chicago the Allisons had insisted on his taking a seat in their carriage. Allison himself was dropped at his club, Florence in turn left Mr. Forrest at his lodgings, and then was driven home. This was actually all Elmendorf had been able to learn.

But here was basis enough for all manner of theory and conjecture, none of them to Forrest's advantage, and Elmendorf felt that the more he could make of them the better for his own cause and the worse for Forrest. There had been an intangible something in Allison's manner to warn the tutor that just so soon as the guests were out of the way he might look out for squalls. Allison had greeted him with utter absence of cordiality, and Elmendorf felt that his employer was even more displeased with him than when he went away. Under such circumstances a wise man would have avoided saying or doing anything to augment the feeling against him, but Elmendorf, except in his own conceit, was far from wise, and his propensity for putting his foot in it was phenomenal. Allison loved his post-prandial cigar,—it agreed with him,—and so did his guest. The ladies withdrew quite early, Cary slipped away, and Elmendorf should have slipped after him, but here were two great men of the railway world, the natural oppressors of the masses, the very type of the creatures he delighted in describing upon the platform as "bloated bond-holders;" their conversation could hardly fail to be of interest to him, and he remained. Warming up to their work, they were discussing the situation at Pullman and its probable effect upon the employees of the roads centring in Chicago. That their views should be radically opposed to those of their absorbed listener was of course to be expected, and Elmendorf was fidgeting furiously upon his chair, every now and then striving to interject a sentence and claim the floor, but Allison knew his man, and knew that, once started, Elmendorf could not well be suppressed. Every attempt on the part of the tutor to interpose, therefore, was met by uplifted and warning hand and prompt "Permit me" or "Permit Mr. Sloan to finish, if you please," which was galling in the last degree. Elmendorf had planned to have a conciliatory word or two with Miss Allison, with whom he knew himself to have been in grave disfavor ever since the occasion of his presuming to tender advice and remonstrance on the score of Mr. Forrest, but she had escaped to her own room again immediately after quitting the table. Her manner towards him showed that she had neither forgiven nor forgotten the

impertinence, and that was additional reason why he should have done nothing more, in that household at least, to add to the array of his offences. But presently the opportunity came, and he could not resist. The Interstate Commerce Law was again under discussion. Allison had always fiercely opposed it, declaring it to be an utterly unconstitutional and unwarrantable interference with the rights of corporations and individuals. Mr. Sloan was rather more conservative. He was contending that, despite its restrictions upon certain railway companies, the appointment of the Commission had resulted in much that was beneficial to most parties concerned.

Allison burst forth impetuously: "Why, Sloan, look at the thing! It is direct and absolute usurpation on the part of the general government of the functions of the State. Here's a road running from Chicago to Cairo, for instance. Its traffic is entirely within the State; its offices, road-bed, and rolling-stock—everything concerning it, in fact—within the limits of the State; and yet, just because it delivers freight and passengers over on the Kentucky shore, here comes the general government formulating laws for its control, which should be the province of the State, and of the State only. If we've got to be trammelled by legislation, let it be at the hands of our own legislators—— Eh, what?" he asked, breaking suddenly off to acknowledge the presence of the butler standing solemnly beside him with a card on the salver. Allison took the card mechanically, glanced at the name, and, even as he was saying, "Oh, show him in here. Send this up to Miss Florence," Elmendorf had seized his opportunity and "chipped in."

"Yes, but, my dear sir," he began, in his eager, nerve-racking, whining tone, "is there not inconsistency here? Can you deny that when the legislature, not only of this, but of neighboring States, essayed to enact laws on these very subjects, your attorneys were promptly on the ground to argue against it and to declare that only Congress had the power under the Constitution to regulate commerce between the States? Can you deny that at the meeting of managers and business-men here one of the most prominent of your number declared that you objected to any and all legislation? Can you deny that when Congress did take the matter up your attorneys were just as promptly in Washington, proclaiming that any attempt to legislate in your affairs was a violation of the rights of the sovereign States? Can you deny, in fine, that when the whole subject was under discussion here a second time, one of your most eminent *confrères* put himself on record as saying that, while he was opposed to any legislation, of two evils he preferred to choose the less, and if any legislators were to meddle with the affairs of the roads, better let it be the State Solons, who were far more—well—approachable and ready to listen to—let us say—reason? Can you deny that——" But here Elmendorf found himself without listeners. The odd point in it all was that very much that he said was true; and Allison was reddening with wrath, and Sloan chuckling with suppressed merriment, when the entrance of a tall, brown-eyed, brown-moustached man in evening dress gave both opportunity to escape the deluge.

"Forrest at last!" exclaimed the host, turning and seizing his hand. "So sorry you were detained, lad; but sit you down, sit you down, and let me ring for some dinner for you. No? Had a bite? All right. Take a chair and some wine. Sloan and I were whacking away at the old bone."

"Yes, Allison, and here's a Federal officer who won't agree with you for a moment."

With a dissatisfied shake of his head, Elmendorf had arisen as though to pull his chair nearer the end of the table and resume his attack, but Allison had purposely turned his back squarely upon him and was drawing Forrest to the very place the tutor had hoped to occupy. Sloan arose and cordially shook hands with the new-comer, who then for the first time, apparently, caught sight of Elmendorf. The latter had started as though to come forward, but something in Forrest's eyes restrained him. The lieutenant simply bowed, and said, very coldly, "Good-evening," but did not even mention the tutor by name.

"Now, Mr. Forrest," began Mr. Sloan, with much heartiness of manner, "I want you to say to Allison here just what you said to me. He's a trifle hot-headed to-night. He thinks the government has been paternalizing at our expense, and that only harm will come from it."

Forrest looked from one to the other a moment, a quiet smile upon his lips. All the previous afternoon as they trundled along in the cosy private car had these gentlemen been disputing over the same thing, and late in the evening, as Mr. Sloan and Forrest were enjoying a cigar together, they, too, had had a chat upon the subject, and Sloan had turned and looked upon the officer in some surprise. In common with most of his class, the man of wealth and worldly wisdom had regarded the *genus* regular officer as a something impressive, possibly, on parade, useful probably on the frontier, but out of place anywhere else. That he should have read or studied anything beyond drill and dime novels was not to be expected. The magnates had even had their modest game of draw poker at a late hour and laughingly referred some mooted question to Forrest as a probable expert, and were astonished to hear that he had never played, not so much because he disapproved of it as because he had never had time. Allison had already found out that Forrest was a student and a thinker, but up to that evening he was the only man of the party who believed that the average officer had any other use for time than to kill it. Whatever it was that Mr. Forrest might have said to Mr. Sloan, it was evident he did not care to repeat it now.

"I would rather not reopen the matter," said he. "Possibly I had no right to forecast the action of the government, even speculatively, in a contingency that may not arise."

Elmendorf planted his chair and lighted a cigarette, throwing himself down with an air as much as to say, "Well, I've got to be bored and must be resigned to it, since they won't listen to a man of intelligence;" and Allison, with blacker gloom in his eyes, looked squarely at him as he began to speak:

"Sloan, you're not even sipping your wine; Forrest, you never seem

to indulge. Suppose we three adjourn to my den, where the books are right at hand. Mr. Elmendorf has his duties and will excuse us."

If he had struck him, the master of the house could not more have stung his employee. Even Forrest, who by this time had many reasons of his own for bringing Elmendorf to book, tingled with something like sympathy at a slight so marked. There were so many other and better ways of letting Elmendorf know that in the coming conference his presence could be dispensed with, that Sloan spoke of it the moment they reached the library; but Allison was imperious and positive. "You don't begin to know the man," said he. "Anything less than unmistakable prohibition he would consider as invitation, and he'd turn our talk into a lecture on the relations of capital to labor. You saw how he got in the instant I stopped a moment, Sloan."

"Faith and I did," said Sloan, laughing, "and he hit you fellows in the ribs. Why, where'd he find it all out?"

"I'm blessed if I know, unless it was from the newspaper men. They get hold of almost everything,—wrong side foremost, as a rule, but they get it. Now I heard something of your talk last night. Brooks was speaking of it. He looks upon the Interstate Bill just as I do. What do you mean by saying it might prove our salvation?" he asked, abruptly, turning to Forrest.

"I was simply supposing a case," said Forrest, calmly. "Say that the Granger element in one State, the Populists in another, the Socialists in a third, were to obtain control of the legislature and elect their own governor. You say they are utterly antagonistic to the railways; that in the event of a general strike, mob violence, etc., they would refuse you help or protection; that as common carriers you would be powerless to carry out your contracts, and that not only passenger and freight traffic would be blocked, but the government mails. Now, prior to February, '87, the general government, as I understand it, had left the management of the railways to the States. It had neither formulated laws for their control nor adopted measures for their protection. In the great railway riots of '77, when the police and militia were whipped and cowed by the mobs, such States as Pennsylvania and Illinois begged for government aid and got it. Our troops were called in from the Rocky Mountains to Chicago, and from Louisiana to Pittsburg. In the riots at Buffalo, three years ago, New York's fine National Guard, and in those at Homestead the Pennsylvania division, were sufficient to put an end to the mischief, and neither State had to ask for help; but here lies within your limits far greater possibility for riot and bloodshed than can be found elsewhere in the Union, and suppose that to pander to the masses here, as he has done in pardoning the Anarchists, your governor should deny you protection and permit assault, riot, and violence whenever you attempted to move engines or trains. It is my belief that you can now look where you could not before the passage of that Interstate Commerce Bill in '87, for the protection denied you at home. When the Congress of the United States enacted that 'every common carrier should, according to their respective powers, afford all reasonable, proper, and equal facilities for the interchange of traffic between their respective lines,'—I am quoting

now,—'and for receiving, forwarding, and delivery of passengers and property to and from their several lines,' the supreme power of the land asserted its right to assume control over all roads except those doing business exclusively within the limits of some one State; and when the general government says to a common carrier that it must do this or must not do that, it means that the general government will back it in carrying out its orders; and whether it be mails, passengers, live stock, perishable goods, time freight or construction trains, the railway companies can now look to the United States for protection, whether any individual State likes it or not. You have abused that law as a menace to your rights as a business-man, Mr. Allison. You may live to bless it as all that stood between you and anarchy."

Forrest had spoken in a quiet, conversational tone, noting that Allison had closely eyed the heavy folds of the portière, and once, stepping quickly thither, had drawn it aside and glanced about him; but the tutor had vanished, if that was what he was looking for. When Forrest stopped, Sloan turned to his friend with a merry twinkle in his eyes. "How's that for Federalist doctrine as opposed to States' rights, Allison? I expect to hear you saying, 'Almost thou persuadest me to be a Federalist,' before Forrest is done with you."

"Well, I certainly never looked for such an interpretation of the law. It has only been a bother, a nuisance, a senseless trammel upon us thus far, interfering with all our business, breaking up our long-haul and short-haul tariffs, requiring us to account practically to the government for every penny we charge and almost every one we expend. Do you mean this is the way the law is looked upon at head-quarters?" he asked, glancing keenly at the soldier.

"I have no means of knowing how the general understands it," said Forrest, simply. "The matter may be tested before we think possible. I understand that the condition of these poor people at Pullman is getting worse every day, and that there is wide-spread sympathy for them among the wage-workers everywhere; and I don't wonder at it."

"Why, they've only themselves to blame, Forrest. They seem to have done no laying up for a rainy day. They had good homes and good wages so long as business boomed, and they have spent just as freely as they got the money. Now there's no business for the company, no orders for cars, not enough to keep them going. No man can expect a company to run its business at a loss; and yet these people kick because they can't have the same wages they were getting when work was brisk."

"Well, now, is that strictly so, Mr. Allison? I have talked with these people. I have been told by them, quiet, conservative, well-informed Pullman men, that they concede that the wages must come down, and that all hands will have to retrench awhile until better times. They are willing to do that and stand by their company. But, on the other hand, they think, and I think, the company owes something to them. Here are honest, capable, intelligent fellows who have served the company fifteen and twenty years, have reared families within its walls, occupied its houses, and paid its rents. They may not have saved,

I admit, but they have *served* faithfully and long and well. They have never failed in their obligation to the company, and prompt payment of wages is not the only duty of a corporation to its people. The company is wealthy. It is even declaring a dividend. None of its salaries have been cut down as a consequence of the business depression. It has simply said to its wage-workers, 'You alone are the ones to suffer. You and your families and your cares and troubles are nothing to us. Here's the difference between your last month's wages and your last month's rent. Next month there'll be no wages to speak of, but we'll expect the rent all the same.' In my opinion, that company is losing the chance of winning the love and gratitude of thousands of men and women whose affection is worth a good deal more than all the money they'll ever save this way. It would have been an easy thing to say, 'We'll bear our share of the burden. These are hard times, and we've had to cut down your wages until the dawning of a better day; we'll cut the rents down, too.'"

"Forrest, that's Utopia," said Mr. Allison.

"I admit it, but I know something of these people, Mr. Allison. The past year perhaps has done more to open my eyes than all those which have preceded. I have seen something of the struggles, the self-denial, the charity, the patience, the helpfulness, of the working classes. I have learned a feeling of respect and sympathy for those who are the workers that is exceeded only by the contempt I feel for the drones and for those whom they hail as their advisers."

"Like our ——-, for instance," said Allison, uplifting his eyes as though to include the study aloft.

"Well, I know less of him or his speeches, perhaps, except by vague report, than of others who are prominent. They are preaching a doctrine that can only make matters worse for the laborer. They counsel strike, and forcible, riotous resistance to the employment of others. It can lead only to tumult, to rioting that brings out the criminal and the desperate classes; outrage results, and the sympathy they might have received goes against them. Their very worst enemies are these men who are posing as strike-leaders."

"Well, what do you think of the prospect? Does it look like an outbreak?" asked Mr. Sloan.

"To me, yes, for every day makes the suffering worse at Pullman, and the company refuses to hear of arbitration. From a purely business point of view I cannot deny their right to do so, but the very attitude assumed by the corporation makes many of the labor-leaders' accusations true. The company has not contracts enough for new cars to keep all hands employed on full time and full wages, perhaps. Many of its employees are single men, comparatively new at the business; they can afford to be frankly told to go elsewhere in search of work; but to hold everybody while scaling the wages of all hands, month after month, down, down until a family man cannot pay his rent and feed his children, then the cord breaks. Just or unjust, the impression prevails among the railway men everywhere I have been that the Pullman Company has made vast sums, that it is about the only company not actually losing money now, and that it is protecting

itself through a bad year by heavily taxing its people. There have been sympathetic strikes before; what if one should be ordered now?"

"That's the enormity of the whole business," broke in Mr. Allison. "What I wish could be done with our hands would be to have them regularly enlisted for the work,—so many years unless sooner discharged,—just like the soldiers, by Jove! Then when a man quit work it would be desertion, and when he combined with others to strike it would be mutiny. Ah, we'd have a railway service in this country then that would beat the world."

Forrest smiled. "Rather too much like a standing army controlled by corporation that would be; and a standing army is a luxury the Constitution forbids even to sovereign States. Besides, would men enlist in such a service?"

"Well, how do *you* get them, then? The Lord knows you treat them worse than we do."

"The Lord might believe that if he knew nothing but what the papers say," answered Forrest, half laughing. "But in point of fact we don't begin to work our men as you do, and we give them far more for their work. Another thing: our workman knows just what he is going to get from month to month, and he signs his contract to accept such bounty, pay, rations, etc., as may be provided by law. No corporation can scale him down ten, twenty, thirty, or fifty per cent. when times are hard; it takes the Congress of his country to do that; and when, as once happened, Congress did adjourn without appropriating a cent for our pay, the whole army stood by its obligation, because it knew the people would stand by it next term. That, by the way, was the year you railway men had most urgent need of its aid,—'77. But," said Forrest, suddenly starting to his feet, "here I have been inflicting a half-hour's monologue, and—I had hoped to see Miss Allison."

"You have fed Allison some truths that will do him good, if he can only digest them," said Mr. Sloan, whimsically, "and put me up to some things I'm glad to hear. Was that what took you off so hurriedly and kept you away so long,—investigating the feeling of the railway hands all over the West?"

"No, indeed," said Forrest, promptly. "It was a very different thing."

"By the way, Forrest, that reminds me," said Allison, with a grin on his face, as he touched his bell to summon the butler, "you've never told us what did take you off, and my sister has been consumed with scandal or something about it. She began at me this afternoon. I told her to apply to you for particulars." *Bang* again on the bell, also "Damn that butler! He's never around after nine o'clock. I believe he goes to sleep."

A quick step through the drawing-room and parlor. The folds of the portière were drawn aside, and Elmendorf stood revealed. "The butler stepped out a moment ago, sir. I met him at the front. Can I summon any one else for you?"

Allison's face showed added annoyance. "No. Unless—at least—— Is Miss Florence in the parlor?"

"Miss Allison some time since, sir, begged to be excused."

"Isn't she well?" asked Allison, looking at the tutor in some amaze.

"I cannot say as to that, sir. Miss Allison was in conversation with her aunt awhile."

"Odd," said Allison, irritably. "These women are queer. Excuse me a moment, will you?" And, rising, he left the room.

They felt, rather than heard, that he had gone up to make his own inquiries. His voice presently was audible, growling in his sister's boudoir. Elmendorf had disappeared and gone they knew not whither.

"Well, it's time for me to be off," said Sloan, consulting his watch, "yet I don't want to leave without saying good-night."

"As for me, I have to go," said Forrest, "because of an engagement."

"Oh, you can go any time, as you merely dropped in to call on the ladies; but I dined here. Now—— Excuse me, Mr. Forrest, I've only known you a day or two, but you've interested me, so to speak. You stick to Allison, and you'll be of infinite use to him in case of trouble here. He gets off his base sometimes. Stick to him, my lad, and your fortune's made."

Ten minutes later, when John Allison, with vexation and trouble on his brow, came down to the library, his guests were gone. A few lines on a card explained. Each had engagements. "No wonder," said Mrs. Lawrence, joining him presently. "I know what his engagement is, and Mr. Forrest seemed to know what was coming."

Impatiently, irritably, the master of the house turned away. "I want to hear no more of this. Of course, if it's true, I shall know how to act. I'll—I'll go to the library in the morning, early."

This he did, and apparently to some purpose, for when he saw Mr. Forrest at the club at noon he turned his back upon him and moved quickly away.

CHAPTER XI.

During the week that followed, Mr. Elmendorf seemed to tread on air and bask in sunshine and favoring breeze. When returning from the trip, Allison had almost made up his mind to get rid of him. Now, while at the bottom of his heart he felt that he liked, and suspected that he trusted, him less than ever, Allison found himself powerless to carry out his intention. In the first place, Cary was certainly behaving better than he had behaved in long months before: Aunt Lawrence vouched for that. She deplored only the fact that he seemed unable now to fix his ambition on any other career than the army. Still, even doting and distracted parents have been known to cherish such an ambition long months at a time, and to stimulate it by promises of "working all possible wires" to secure the much-desired cadetship. Then if it couldn't be had they were just so much ahead: the boy had been weaned from evil habits and associations through his longing to enter the army. That he should have been disappointed at

the last was through no fault of theirs, even though it gave them secret joy. They were doubly the gainers. Had the father stopped to think, he would perhaps have seen that Cary's steadiness and studious ways were all due to this new and consuming desire and to the advice of his friends at head-quarters; but Allison had many cares and worries now, and could only thank heaven, and perhaps, as Aunt Lawrence suggested, Elmendorf, that such reformation had been achieved in his boy.

But never until the evening of his return had he seriously faced the problem as to Forrest for a son-in-law. Only once or twice had he vaguely asked himself if there was danger of Flo's falling in love with him. With parental fondness he looked upon it as quite natural that Forrest should fall in love with her, and with worldly wisdom thought it more than probable that Forrest should desire to become possessed of so many charms and concomitant stocks and bonds. All that made no serious difference. Forrest might love and languish all he liked, if it was fun for Flo. It never occurred to him that her father's daughter could fall in love on her own account with a penniless lieutenant. But now he and Aunt Lawrence had had a sharp talk. Florence was not to go down, said she, and it was time her brother knew why. The child was infatuated with a man unworthy of her from almost every point of view, yet who, while paying her lover-like devotions, dared to slight her at times for a—creature with whom he was maintaining relations that needed to be promptly investigated and put an end to. He, that man Forrest, had dared to send a note to Florence Allison excusing himself from dinner on the plea of urgent work that had to be finished, and then was seen in a public place supping with the low-bred person herself. Yes, since Allison demanded to know, Mr. Elmendorf *was* her informant. But ask anybody at the Hotel Belmont, where the two brazenly appeared together at the very hour Forrest was due here. It wasn't a block from the library. Then ask the janitor of the Lambert who were there in the private office afterwards, and, though he is here now, see if from here Forrest does not go back to her, back to that same office where so often they have been closeted before this. Mrs. Lawrence had been compelled, she said, to open Florence's eyes as to this deceit and duplicity of her lover, and naturally she had declined to go down-stairs and receive him. She did not say, however, that Florence had indignantly refused at first to believe that there was anything wrong, had worked herself up into a glorious passion of tears over the matter, and was looking like a fright in consequence when, full twenty minutes after its arrival, Mrs. Lawrence pushed Forrest's card under the locked door of her niece's room. Elmendorf had slipped out twice during the evening, was in and out like a flitting shadow, and on each return had brought Mrs. Lawrence new and more significant tidings. Florence had bathed her face and done all she could to make herself presentable, and was preparing to go down, when informed that Forrest was gone. And later that night Mrs. Lawrence deluged her, as she had her brother, with the details of Forrest's scandalous doings.

Wells was out when Allison visited the library the following morn-

ing, but the janitor was on hand to do reverence to the great director and trustee. "Who was in the private office last night, Maloney?" said he, sternly. And, distressed to think that anybody could suppose he'd allow any one there who had no business, Maloney promptly answered, "Sure nobody, sorr, barrin' Miss Wallen and Mr. Forrest. He come back twice and took her home. Misther Elmendorf was here, sorr——" But Allison did not wait to hear about him. Seated at her desk when he entered, Jenny promptly arose in respect to the distinguished arrival, but he merely growled an inquiry for Mr. Wells, looked her sharply over, and banged out again, leaving the poor girl with vague sense of new trouble to add to the weight of care she was already bearing. As he tramped away down town, Allison told himself he was not sorry that he had so crushing a piece of circumstantial evidence with which to demolish Forrest's aspirations, yet down in the depths of his heart he knew he was sorry, for he had grown to like him well. Just what course to pursue he had not determined. He would see Wells, see the Hotel Belmont people, see one or two parties referred to by Mr. Elmendorf as "highly respectable and responsible" who could tell him far more in the same strain, then see his brother trustees and dispose of Miss Wallen's case. Meantime, Florence was kindly, affectionately urged not to see Mr. Forrest in the event of his calling. And so Elmendorf's schemes were working grandly. He could well afford now to let them seethe and bubble. He could hold his peace and position at home, give renewed attention to those grander projects for the elevation of the down-trodden and the down-treading of the elevated, keep out of Forrest's way, and occupy himself in the cultivation of his new acquaintance Major Cranston, in the enjoyment of the privileges accorded him in Cranston's library, and in the incidental conversion to the true political faith of those dyed-in-the-wool devotees to Cranston's service,—iniquitous, feudalistic, slave-like service Elmendorf deemed it,—old Sergeant McGrath, his better half, and the nephew.

And while he was in the midst of this, came other helping hands. Florence Allison's social friends were prompt to hear of her return and of her bringing with her the objectionable aspirant, and were equally prompt to call in eager shoals. Somewhere the impression had got abroad that her army friend had been ordered off under a cloud, and, though no one at head-quarters could explain it, many society people could, and entirely to their own satisfaction. The men who knew Forrest liked him, but few women seemed to know him at all. After standing a social siege of some forty-eight hours, even Miss Allison's nerves gave way, and she had to deny herself to callers. In the midst of the speculation and sensation ensuing at the moment came the news that once more, suddenly and without the faintest explanation, Mr. Forrest had left Chicago. "I deeply regret your illness and that I was unable to see you to-day," he wrote from the club to Miss Allison, "but I am ordered away on duty that may cover several weeks, and have not a moment to spare. Tell Cary for me that I will leave with my landlady the books I promised him. I would urge his reading them carefully. With my regards to Mr. Allison and Mrs. Lawrence,

believe me, Yours faithfully." And this was only four days after the luckless dinner. Florence ministered to the consuming curiosity of her aunt and showed her the letter, but the adjutant-general at headquarters was less considerate; even society reporters could extract from him no hint as to why or where Lieutenant Forrest had gone. But that only served to stimulate conjecture and suggestion; and, to gossips born, a little stimulant goes, like the stories it sets afloat, long leagues beyond hope of recapture.

Then there were some lonely, anxious days for a pale-faced, slender, sad-eyed girl who seemed to get no benefit from the bracing breezes, and then, bursting suddenly from winter to summer, as is often the way with our ill-ordered, turbulent, defiant, and generally indescribable climate, came the first day of moisture-laden heat, depressing, debilitating,—a day when the tide of his affairs swept Elmendorf from his moorings at Cranston's and sent the freeholder thereof in search of a stenographer,—the day when poor Jenny begged to be excused from having even to write that detested name. And then speedily came the long-threatened outbreak, the demand of the American Railway Union that the public cease to patronize or the railway companies to run, no matter what their contracts, the cars of the Pullman Company. "We've got 'em by the throat at last," screamed Mart Wallen at Donnelly's Shades that night. "This means that the people, the people of the whole nation, have risen to down that damned old miser, and we'll make a clean sweep of other misers while we're about it."

"We've got 'em foul," echoed with drunken hiccoughs the graceless nephew Mrs. Mac and her sobered sergeant were dragging home between them, deaf to the eloquence of Elmendorf haranguing the crowd in the open square beyond. What was he saying?—"Stand firm, and the blood of the innocent victims of the glorious appeal of seven years ago, the martyred lives of the innocent men who died upon the scaffold, strangled in their effort to speak for you and your children, not only will not have been lost in vain, but soon shall be magnificently avenged. Oh that it had been my lot to lead you here in '86! God be thanked, it is my lot to lead you now!"

"Oh that ye had been here to lead in '86, ye howling lunatic," echoed Mrs. Mac, shaking her one unoccupied fist at the glorified but luckily distant face of the speaker; "yer only lot this night would have been in the grave-yard, for ye never would have lived to lead anything, barrin' yer own funeral."

CHAPTER XII.

Then came a few days in which Elmendorf was in his glory. To be in a position where he could command attention, where he could practically compel people of all classes and conditions to be his listeners, to hang upon his words and regard him as clothed with power backed by authority, this was indeed joy and triumph new to him, though still far below the dreams he had dreamed. Though not even

a member of the great railway union, not even possessing the confidence of its leaders, the fervor of his speeches had won him favor and admitted him to their councils. Not even tolerated for days at head-quarters, he suddenly reappeared there with all the assurance of the past, and during the first forty-eight hours of the memorable strike no one man in all Chicago seemed to carry on his shoulders the weight of information, authority, and influence of John Allison's whilom tutor, whose note of dismissal, unopened, awaited him at the deserted study. To the officials of the American Railway Union he represented himself as deep in the confidence of the officials at military head-quarters, personally intimate with most of the staff, and a man to whose warnings the general himself ever lent attentive ear. To the adjutant-general and others in authority, the chief being still away, he declared himself the envoy of the leaders of the strike, a man empowered to levy war or compass peace. In both assumptions he was impudent, yet not without support. What he craved was prominence, notoriety, the fame, if not the fact, of being an arbiter in the destinies of Chicago in this crisis of her history. From the Pullman to the Leland, from inner dépôt to outlying freight-yards, from meetings to municipal offices, he sped, never stopping for rest or refreshment. Irascible officers at Springfield, receiving despatches signed Elmendorf, put an H to his name and lopped it off at the neck. There were two precincts he left unpenetrated,—the head-quarters of the railway managers and those of the National Guard. Allison had made him known at the one, his public utterances and persistent sneers at "the militia boys," "our tin soldier boys," at the other. His appearance in the armory of any regiment in the city would have been the signal for a demonstration he had no desire to face. Through the newspaper offices, too, he flitted, shedding oracular statement and prophecy, claiming to speak "by the card" when he had news to tell, and preserving mysterious, suggestive silence when questioned on matters whereof he knew nothing.

Two days had the strike been in force. Switchmen, yardmen, firemen, had quit their posts, and they or sympathizing gangs of toughs stoned and cursed the men who took their places. Yard-masters and master-mechanics leaped into the cabs and handled the levers of switch-engines; white-handed clerks and electricians swung lanterns and coupled cars; conductors turned switchmen, superintendents became conductors, and managers stepped down to yard-masters; and still the mob, gaining in numbers and wrath and villany with every hour, blackguarded the trainmen, blockaded the trains, and bombarded with sticks and stones and coupling-pins the few shrinking and terrified passengers. Trains reaching the city were towed in with every pane smashed and their inmates a mass of cuts and bruises. Trains due in the city and seized by the strikers were side-tracked at desolate prairie stations miles from food and water, and helpless, pleading women and children were penned up in them and left to hunger and thirst and tremble. In vain the railway officials pleaded with the city authorities for protection for passengers and trains. "We have been watching everywhere; we've seen no violence," was the answer. Policemen along the railway lines laughed and looked on while, almost within

swing of their clubs, strikers were kicking a victim to death. In vain all appeals to the State. This was a popular movement,—a poor man's protest against the tyranny of a grasping monopolist,—The People *vs.* Pullman. Let the railways join in and discard his cars, and all would be well. Contracts be damned! What cared they for the law of contract when on the eve of revolution—and election? Feigning to believe that the managers were merely pretending that their roads were blocked, openly asserting that the managers could run their trains if they really wanted to, and slyly intimating that all the destruction thus far effected was at the hands of paid emissaries of the managers themselves, officials of a great State and of a great city, sworn to preserve peace and good order and enforce the laws, dared to look idly on and trust the masses, to whom they betrayed the honor of the commonwealth, for the vindication of a re-election. Within three days of the start, passenger traffic, except on the two or three roads in the hands of the Federal courts, was practically ended, freight traffic paralyzed, and the great stock-yards were in the hands of a mob of frantically rejoicing men. "Not one wheel shall turn in any yard in all Chicago with the morrow's sun," said Elmendorf, slyly and jeeringly exultant in the presence and hearing of officers and clerks at the Pullman building late that night. "The managers have played their last card, made their last bluff. The State and the city virtually tell them that it is their own fight, with their own men, men whom they have systematically browbeaten, bullied, swindled, and starved until now the worm has turned. At last you see the beginning of the end, the dawn of the glorious future, the rise of labor against capital, and your friends the magnates have the option of ruin or surrender. I tell you, gentlemen, three hundred thousand freemen will line those tracks at noon to-morrow, and if their——" But the officers to whom he addressed himself turned impatiently away. Clerks were passing to and fro along the hall between the office of the adjutant-general and their desks. Some powerful but subdued excitement pervaded the building. Watchers of the strikers had noted the increasing number of officers in civilian dress long after the usual business hours, and Elmendorf, quick to take the alarm, had hastened thither to ferret out the cause. Vain his effort to communicate with his one victim. He was at his desk, and a vigilant ex-sergeant-major of cavalry scowled at the would-be intruder and told him visitors could not enter the clerks' rooms. Vain his effort to extract news along the corridors. No man seemed to know why so many of them were there. Perplexed, he rushed back to his associates, the strike-leaders. "Are you sure they're stanch at Springfield?" he asked; "sure they haven't asked for aid from Washington?" The idea was laughed to scorn. "The governor is with us to the bitter end," was the loud boast of prominent sympathizers, "and until he touches the button no power in or out of Illinois can stand between us and victory. To-morrow we lock the lines from Pittsburg to the Pacific."

Exultant, he sprang into a cab and drove to the north side. It was late at night, but he had his latch-key. A bath, a few hours' rest, a change of linen, and he would issue forth on the morrow refreshed,

invigorated, ready to launch his shallop on this tide in his affairs which, taken at full flood, must lead to everlasting fame and fortune. Who would now dare crush him with curt refusal to listen? Who would pooh-pooh his prophecies, who deny his views, who withhold the homage due him now, as he strode, agitator, elevator, inspirer, *Anax andrôn*,—King of men,—the divinely appointed, heaven-anointed leader of mankind in this sublime movement for liberty and the Lord only knew what else? It was late, and the great house was dark, but he let himself in, and, seeking first the butler's pantry, ransacked the larder for refreshment. He had eaten and drunk his fill, when the electric bell called his eye to the indicator. Some one at the street door. Humming softly his blithe tune, he shuffled over the tiled pavement and unbolted the inner door. A telegraph-boy handed him two messages, with a receipt-book and pencil. "John Allison," was all he said.

"I don't think he's home," said Elmendorf. "Did you try the club?"

For answer the boy sleepily pointed with grimy finger to the address on the envelope. Street and number were distinct.

"Well, just wait, youngster, and I'll see if he's in," said Elmendorf, and trotted swiftly, noiselessly up-stairs. Mr. Allison's room was open, the gas burning dimly at the toilet-table, but no one was there. Even as he hesitated what to do, a door at the east end of the wide corridor quietly opened, and a flood of light from Miss Allison's boudoir shot across the darkness. Elmendorf heard the soft rustle of silken folds, and hastened towards the light. Florence stood there at the doorway in some rich wrap of a pale, delicate shade of pink. Billows of creamy lace broke away from the shoulders and down along the entire front. The short elbow-sleeves seemed to burst into creamy foam, while a band of sable fur encircled and contrasted with the pure white throat, and was caught at the back by a knot of ribbon. It was one of her Parisian purchases, a modern conceit, something she never wore except in her own room or Aunt Lawrence's, but Elmendorf looked upon her with a glow of admiration in his keen, eager eyes that even in her hour of anxiety and fatigue she could not fail to notice and resent.

"If you have messages for my father, I will take charge of them," she simply said.

"Er—pardon me. I was about to offer my services, Miss Allison, as these may be immediate. If you will tell me where Mr. Allison is to be found——"

"I will not trouble you," she answered, coldly, and the plump white hand, extended for the messages, was the only thing about her that did not seem to turn from him in dislike.

Flushed with the triumph of the two days gone, intoxicated, possibly, by the dreams of his own dawning greatness, Elmendorf refused to accept rebuff. Who was she to treat with scorn the man whose merest word now could move a million stalwarts! "You must pardon me, Miss Allison," he answered, with emphasis. "I am not here in the capacity of a menial in the household. The events of the past few

days have conspired to make me a factor in affairs, with power and influence far exceeding that wielded by my late employer. Furthermore, I should see him, or rather he should seek to see me, within the next few hours, unless he has resigned himself to the crash which must involve all he holds priceless in business and may even involve all he holds precious here."

"May I trouble you for those despatches, Mr. Elmendorf?" she asked, wearily, almost disgustedly.

Elmendorf flushed with wounded vanity. "The despatches are yours," he said, bowing with marked reverence. "But, as this may be my last opportunity of speaking to you in some days, I have that to say which I urge you for your own sake, your brother's sake, your father's sake, to hear and heed. On many occasions I have conscientiously striven to point out to your honored, if somewhat opinionated, sire the injustice, indeed I may say the brutality, of the views he so openly expresses towards the labor class. He has not received my advice in the kindly spirit in which it was offered, but, as possibly you know, matters have come to a climax, and such is the gravity of the situation that not only is his property in jeopardy, but his life. Nay, I know you have not forgiven me for words spoken only through motives of the most loyal and honorable devotion to your best interests. I see this bores you; but, Miss Allison, let me say to you in so many words that if the P. Q. & R. road persists in its refusal to restore those trainmen who were discharged yesterday for side-tracking a Pullman car at Grand Crossing, your father's life may be the forfeit."

"And yet the strike-leaders declare there is no violence, and that the strikers will commit none," she said, wearily.

"That was the spirit with which they entered upon this controversy; but when the managers persisted in hiring men to fill their places, and even dared to discharge employees for no worse crime than sympathy with their own brothers, even they who have listened to and obeyed me in the past murmur and threaten now. It will take my uttermost—as it shall be my sweetest—effort to stand between you and harm——"

But here the pink corded silk swished disdainfully about, its Watteau pleat flashed out of sight through the door-way, and that portal was slammed in the speaker's face. The mover of multitudes found himself alone in the darkened hall, snubbed and wrathful. Cary's room was just above, and the tutor smiled sardonically as, peering in there, he saw the boy lying half dressed upon his bed, covered by a Navajo blanket that Forrest had given him on his birthday, a revolver on the chair. A moment later, in his own room, he found pinned on his toilet-table a note addressed in Allison's well-known hand. It was a curt dismissal from his service, subject to the stipulated "one month's notice," and an intimation that in the interim his services and his presence could both be dispensed with. No reason was assigned, though the teeming columns of the press contained reason more than enough.

"Turned out like a dog," he snarled. "Let us see what they'll say in the morning."

And then he started and listened, for down on the floor below light,

hurried footfalls sped along the corridor. It was Florence hastening to her father's room. Stealthily Elmendorf sprang to the landing without, leaned over the balustrade, and bent his ear. He heard the unmistakable r-r-r-r-ing of the telephone bell,—Allison's own room, too. Then he had had to yield one pet prejudice at least as a result of the wide-spread influence of the strike. "He'll have to yield to more than that," said Elmendorf.

"Give me 332,—quick, please," he heard her call, her voice tremulous with excitement. That was not Allison's office; that was not the club nor the managers' association. Where then was he? What scheme was afoot? Hist! "Is that the superintendent's office P. Q. & R.?" she asked. "Is Mr. Allison there—Mr. John Allison? No? Where? Down at the dépôt? Please send for him at once to come to the 'phone. Say his daughter has despatches for him of the utmost importance. Yes, I'll hold the line."

Silence for a long, long minute. Elmendorf could hear his heart thumping loud. What on earth could Allison be doing at the dépôt of the P. Q. & R. at one in the morning? The tracks of the road in a dozen places between the station and the suburbs were piled high with wrecked freight-cars at nine o'clock. The beautiful Silver Special, scheduled to leave each night at eleven-thirty, had been stalled there since the strike began, yet rumor had it that the management meant to launch it southwestward, mails, express, buffet, chair-car, and sleepers complete, if they had to cram its roofs and platforms with deputies armed with Winchesters. Could it be that already wrecking-trains were clearing a passage, and that this hated train, the reddest rag that could be flaunted in the face of the raging bull of the strike, was to burst the blockade and cover the strikers with derision? Perish all thought of sleep or change of linen! That station was a long three miles away, but he could get there, and to the haunts of the strikers farther beyond. But first he must hear the purport of those despatches. Now—her voice again!

"Yes. What is it? Oh, papa? Can you hear me?—distinctly? Then listen. Here are two despatches, the first from Washington—Wait! I must close the door——" Bang! And then came only muffled and inarticulate sound.

Down the winding stairs he sped and knelt at Allison's door. Oh, wise young daughter! not only that, but the inner, the closet door, was shut. No time for squeamishness this. Noiselessly turning the knob, he stealthily entered and tiptoed to the closet just in time to catch these words:

"Entire system will be tied up. Trainmen cannot face such assaults."

"Did you hear? Yes? They were handed Mr. Elmendorf at the door ten minutes—What? Certainly. He came in after midnight. Yes—At least I think he is—He went up to his room—Don't let him get what?—the contents? the despatches? Certainly not. Who will come for them? Why? Aren't you ever coming home? Oh, papa, do be careful! You've no idea of the wild things that—that fellow said. What? The Silver Special going out in an hour—Oh, goody!"

But Elmendorf did not stop to hear more. Slinking away, he sped down the stairway, and in another moment was hastening southward through the starlit summer night.

CHAPTER XIII.

Down in the southwestward district of the far-spreading city a howling mob of half-drunken men, women, and street-boys had surged through the freight-yards of a great railway company, and, first looting the contents, were now setting fire to the cars. Here and there along the glistening lines on which ordinarily sped the swift express or suburban trains were toppled now bulky brown boxes, with their greasy, dripping trucks protruding in air. At adjacent street-corners helmeted policemen, idly swinging their clubs behind them, looked on and laughed. Where at sundown the previous day perhaps a thousand angry-looking men and women had hovered, menacing, above the great crossing of the Central and the P. Q. & R., ten thousand furies now seemed loose. The triumphant boast of the strike-leaders that not a wheel should turn on Allison's road had been laughed to scorn. Not only had Allison, with a force of deputies and loyal trainmen, cleared his tracks at midnight and sent the famous Silver Special, full panoplied, on its way, but the armed deputies that took it to the county line brought in under cover of their Winchesters and the darkness of early morning three side-tracked trains from the far West.

And now indeed was there raging and gnashing of teeth. Men thus braved and thwarted turn to fiends. The sun was not an hour high when the emissaries of the Railway Union were haranguing the people all along these outlying districts. The striking railway-men themselves were redoubling their pleadings with the men who had stood firm, and from pleadings turned to threats. By eight o'clock the flames were shooting high from scores of cars, and under the fierce heat rails were warping and twisting. At half a dozen points the city firemen, gallant fellows, everybody's friends and defenders, loyal to their duty, had dashed up with their hose, only to be furiously assaulted and beaten back. And still the police looked on and laughed. "Like the thief in the night," screamed Elmendorf to his audience of strikers and rioters, "the P. Q. & R. has stolen its trains,—sneaked out its fell purpose. In the hours of rest and slumber, when honest men, brave men, worthy men, seek their pillows and the sanctity of their homes, these despoilers of the poor, these tyrants of a confiding people, conspiring together and corrupting with infamous gold the brethren who have betrayed us, reckless of their pledges, false to their promises—when were they ever else?—have succeeded in running two or three trains through the blockade. Now it remains with you to say how long, how great shall be their triumph. Summon from far and near your manhood and your strength. Call to action every man with a man's heart and a man's arm. See to it that none but stalwarts go on guard to-night or from this time forth, and be ready to act when the sun climbs high. Be ready, I say, for noon shall bring you tidings to

make each heart bound in its seat. Be ready, a million strong if need be, to force your ultimatum down these managerial throats."

Mad with excitement and nervous strain seemed Elmendorf. From point to point his cab was dashing. He had slept but such cat-naps as he could catch when whirling from one part of the city to another. It was he who rushed in to announce to the strike-leaders the astounding fact that, despite his efforts, the P. Q. & R. had pushed out the Silver Special, and was chagrined to find they knew all about it. It galled him through the night to realize that, every time he drove with tidings to anybody else, somebody was sure to be previously informed. He had left Allison's home to hasten to a point three miles distant to rouse the strikers with warnings of the proposed sending out of the train, only to find that in that as in everything else he was too late. With sympathizing spies and friends in every nook and corner, how could it be otherwise? Yet Elmendorf could never divest himself of the idea that without him to warn, advise, or control, chaos would come again. The strikers and their sympathetic mob of toughs had become dispersed during the night, and could not in time be reassembled in sufficient force to oppose successfully all those armed deputies. That was how the road was opened.

But it was closed now, and others, despite the injunctions of United States courts and the efforts of the Federal officials, found it practically useless to attempt to force even the mail trains through the rioting districts. Such was the peril to life and limb that trained engineers and firemen refused to serve, and those who dared were in some cases kicked and beaten into pulp. "Damn the United States courts!" said the mob. "Injunctions don't go here!" And so in vastly augmented numbers and in fury that vented itself in wrecking miles and miles of railway property, the mob was reopening the day. "They'll pay for last night's trick," said an official of the Railway Union, smilingly announcing another distant road tied up. "There's a higher power in the land than even the United States courts, and to-night they'll come to any terms we dictate." And he added, significantly, "Terms are already being dictated."

A messenger entered at the moment. "Mr. Allison isn't at the office, and they don't know where he is. He slept awhile and breakfasted at the club, but left there half an hour ago."

"This is a matter in which probably I can be of more avail than any one else," promply said the ubiquitous Elmendorf. "My personal acquaintance with the gentleman and his family may, and doubtless will, enable me to give more weight to your dictum than it might otherwise bear. Then, too, I may reasonably hope to influence him to agree to the proposed terms and render further harsh measures unnecessary."

The leaders eyed one another and hesitated. Already had they begun to see that Elmendorf assumed much more than he carried. But no one could gainsay his eagerness and devotion to the cause. Red-eyed, sleepless, pallid, he was yet here, eager to devote more hours of effort to the good cause. At all events, it would get him out of the way for a time, and he was becoming too prevalent.

"Oh, very well; if you think you can find him, Mr. Elmendorf, and obtain his written assurance that no further attempt will be made to run a train on the P. Q. & R., there's no objection. The brotherhood of Railway Trainmen stands ready and eager to back us, and if we call it out the managers are simply crushed."

And so, delighted, Elmendorf whisked away on this new mission.

Mr. Allison was not at home, such was the answer by telephone, in the silvery tones he knew so well.

"Then may I ask you to await my coming, Miss Allison?" said he. "I am charged with matters of the utmost consequence to him and to his. I will be there just as fast as a cab can carry me."

The reply was not assuring, but he went, and she waited. Indeed, the girl was waiting anxiously for her father's return. Squads of workingmen, passing the house, had shaken their fists at it and cursed its occupants. The morning wind, sweeping eastward from the lumber-yards along the North Branch, bore ominous sounds of tumult and uproar even so far from the great railway properties. Elmendorf bade his cabman wait, and rang at the bell. The tutor could let himself in with his latch-key: the envoy of five hundred thousand embattled freemen very properly sent his card to the magnate's daughter, and presently she appeared. Sleepless nights and sorrowing days had begun to play havoc with that fair complexion, and Florence Allison's feminine friends could not have failed to remark upon it.

But in the shrouded light of the south parlor these defects were but faintly visible. Elmendorf was pacing nervously up and down, as was his wont when deeply moved, and Miss Allison entered so quietly that he did not hear her, and became conscious of her presence on his return trip from the east window only in time to avert collision. "I beg pardon," he stammered; "I was so deep in thought. Miss Allison, permit me." And he brought forward a chair.

"Thank you, no. It can hardly take that long."

"As you will," he replied, with shrugging shoulders. "Yet I protest I deserve less arrogance of manner. Listen to me," he continued, coming impetuously towards her, whereon she coldly recoiled a pace or two. "From the heat and fury of the battle I have come here once more to attest my devotion, my loyalty, to the interests of those under whose roof I have at least found temporary shelter, if not a home and friends. I come to you clothed with power to speak and to act, turning from public duties, abandoning against their protest the control of thousands of fellow-creatures who lean on me for guidance in this crisis of their lives. On every side this morning I have heard invective, execration, denunciation, threats of the most summary vengeance hurled against your father's name. I tell you, not only does he stand in peril of his life, but that this household, even you—you, so fair, so gentle, so delicate—may at any moment become the prey of a populace as frenzied as ever dragged to the guillotine the shrieking beauties of the Court of France. Miss Allison, whatsoever may be the injustice with which your father has treated me, it sinks into nothingness in comparison with my sense of the peril that threatens you. I am charged with a mission of most sacred character. I am the envoy of

the masses, sent to present their last plea to the man. You know where he is: my carriage is at the door: as you would save him and save yourself, I adjure you to accompany me at once and add your prayers to mine to bend his obdurate heart. Nay, Florence, I implore——"

But Miss Allison had darted back, a fine flush mounting to her forehead at the climax of his impassioned address. She had faint appreciation of histrionics.

"Mr. Elmendorf, I think you're simply crazy," was her eminently practical way of putting an end to the address. "If you wish to see pa—my father, you'll find him at the managers' office at half-past ten, or if you hurry you may catch him at the Lambert." And then she would have turned; but he sprang to her.

"How can you treat me with disdain?" he said. "Because I have been poor, is that reason why I may not one day be rolling in wealth? Number you among your friends my superior in education, in intellect? Is it in the ranks of these empty-headed officers or these brainless, vapid sons of vice and luxury that make up the men of your social circle, you are to be mated? I tell you that this movement means revolution, that within this very week the long-oppressed people shall be paramount, and we who reap shall rule. I have long seen it coming, long foretold and long been ridiculed, but now the hour, ay, the hour and the man have come. Already I have saved you from the dishonor of alliance with——Nay, you must listen," for, with infinite disgust upon her face, she turned angrily away. But, as she would not listen, he sprang forward and seized her wrists. "Florence," he cried, "I——"

And then her voice re-echoed through the hall. "Cary!" she screamed, and far aloft there was a shout of "Coming!" and, six steps at a bound, that exuberant specimen of Young America came thundering down the broad spiral of the stairway. The portentous butler, too, hove suddenly in sight. Elmendorf dropped the subject—and her wrist, whisked his hat off the hall table, and was out of the house and into his cab before the wrathful brother could reach him.

Not until cabby had driven blindly for six blocks did Elmendorf poke his cane through the trap and bid him speed for the Lambert. A carriage stood at the private entrance, and the driver said it was Mr. Allison's. The anteroom was open; the glazed doors to the private office were closed, but excited voices arose from within. He recognized Allison's, Wells's, and that of the chairman of the board of trustees, in hot altercation. The chairman seemed siding with Wells, which added to Allison's wrath, and he wound up with an explosion:

"I've given you more than reason enough. She has been shut up here alone with him time and again at night; she has been seen going to his rooms long after dark; she has been seen walking or driving with him as late as midnight; and the very evening he is due at a gentleman's house at dinner he sends 'urgent business' as his plea, and is found supping alone with her at the Belmont. If she stays, I resign."

"And I answer," thundered Wells, "that that girl's as pure-hearted a woman as ever lived. She has been shut up here with me time and

again, working at my letters until late at night; she has been to my rooms a dozen times to leave her finished work on her homeward way; she has been seen, or could have been seen, walking or driving with me late at night, for I'm proud to say I've taken her home instead of letting her go it alone in the rain; and as for the Belmont, it's the nearest and neatest restaurant I know of, and a dozen times when we had work to be finished in a hurry have I taken her, as Mr. Forrest did, to have her cup of tea there, instead of letting her tramp two miles to get it at home. I'm a married man, and he isn't; that's the only difference. You say if she stays, you resign. All right, Mr. Allison. If she goes, I go."

And then upon this stormy scene entered Elmendorf, the blessed, the peacemaker.

"It would be idle to assume ignorance of the subject of this conference," he began, before any one had sufficiently recovered from surprise to head him off, "and, as it is audible throughout this portion of the building, I could not but hear and be attracted by it. I am here, as ever, to take the side of the oppressed, and to say that should that young woman be punished thus summarily for her—indiscretions, I shall consider it my duty to make public certain circumstances in connection with the case, notably Mr. Forrest's relations with certain families in our midst, that may prove unpleasant reading."

"Enough of this, Mr. Elmendorf," began Wells, angrily. "This young woman, as you term her, is not to be summarily punished, because she has done nothing to deserve it, and despite every sneaking endeavor on your part to cloud her good name. And now, like the double-dealing cad you are, you come here posing as her defender. She needs none, by God, as long as my wife and I are left in the land; and I would trust her cause with Mr. Allison himself at any other time than now, when he is overstrained and worn out.—Miss Wallen is at home," he continued, addressing himself to the two trustees, "owing, she explains, to her mother's severe illness. She, too, is far from well. She has been looking badly for weeks. I was going up there to see what I could do for her, when surprised by this visit. Mr. Waldo, as president of the board of trustees you may understand that I declare these allegations against Miss Wallen to be utterly, brutally unjust, and that I protest against the action proposed by Mr. Allison. Most unfortunately, our talk has been overheard by the man whom of all others I distrust in this connection."

"What business have you here, Mr. Elmendorf, anyway?" said Allison, glowering angrily. "I have forbidden you my doors, yet you follow me."

"My business is with you, sir, not as a suppliant pleading for mercy, as you seem to think, but as the representative of a great people demanding immediate answer to their——"

"What? Why, you meddling, insignificant——" scowled Allison, gripping his cane as though eager to use it.

"Spare your insults and your cane, Mr. Allison. Our relative positions have been utterly reversed in the last forty-eight hours. At this moment there is a clamor for your downfall in the throats of three

hundred thousand toil-worn, honest laboring men. Between their victim and their vengeance no State, no municipal authority will interpose a hand. Last night, false to your promises to the Brotherhood of Trainmen, you sent strong bodies of armed men to terrorize the few strikers gathered in the effort to establish their just claims. You broke their blockade, ran your trains in and out, and indulged in insolent triumph before the people in the morning press. At this moment within easy range of your palatial home ten thousand determined men are assembled, awaiting the word. Once launched upon their work, not one stone of your railway buildings, not a shingle on the roofs of your elevators, not one brick in the walls of your homestead, will be left to show where once they stood. Only my appeals, only my urgent counsels, have thus far restrained them. What will be the consequences if you refuse to listen God alone can tell. Despite my personal wrongs, I have come to you as mediator, deprecating riots and destruction. All the Union asks of you, all I implore you to do is to sign a written promise that until such time as this unhappy controversy be settled the railway company of which you are the virtual head will make no further attempt to move a single train."

Allison's face was a sight to see, purpling with wrath and amaze, yet quivering with sense of the wild absurdity of the situation. Glancing from one to another, portly Mr. Waldo stood uneasily by. He believed some escaped lunatic had invaded the Lambert. Even Wells, who had known Elmendorf for months, seemed unprepared for the sublimity of this flight. He turned away towards the window to let them settle it between them. At last Allison spoke, with exaggerated calm:

"And if I refuse this modest request, what am I to expect as the consequence?"

"The immediate consequence will be the calling out at noon to-day of the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, thus tying up every road in the country, to be followed to-morrow by similar action on the part of the Knights of Labor, involving every industry in the land and turning millions of idle men loose upon our streets. What will stand between you, your hoarded wealth, and your cherished ones—your lives—and the wild vengeance of a long oppressed and starving populace, I leave you to imagine."

"And you actually expect me to believe this trash,—expect me to believe that the State of Illinois will stand idly by and see——"

"The governor of Illinois," interrupted Elmendorf, "has refused to interfere. His heart beats in sympathy with that of his people. He knows their wrongs. He has dared to say that never by his call shall sabre or bayonet be used to intimidate the workingman in the effort to secure his rights. The blood of the martyred men you hanged eight years ago as Anarchists cries aloud for vengeance, and the day of the people has come at last. They govern the governor; *they* are the legislature of Illinois, and when they rise no power on earth can save you."

But Wells could stand it no longer. He was fuming at the great

window overlooking the street, and now burst impetuously into speech. "No power on earth, you absurd lunatic? do you mean that because this State has a crank like you temporarily at the top there's nothing beyond or behind it to save us from pillage and murder and anarchy? Listen to that, you foreign-born fraud!" and far up the street the morning air was ringing with shouts of acclaim; "listen to that! There's some American music for you, you half-witted, stall-fed socialist!" For loud and clear a trumpet-call echoed down the thoroughfare. "Look at that!" he cried, throwing aside the lower shutters, "look at that, you mad-brained, moon-blinded dreamer!"

And there, covering the space almost from curb to curb, a squadron of regular cavalry came sweeping down the avenue, the guidons fluttering over the uniforms of dusty blue, the drab campaign hats shading the stern, soldierly faces, the grim cartridge-belts bulging with copper and lead, the ugly little brown barkers of carbines and revolvers peeping from their holsters. Troop after troop, they swung steadily by, the guns of a light battery following close at their heels. "No power on earth!" persisted the incensed man of books. "You stuffed owl! Go back to your mobs and murderers, and when you've told them what you've seen, keep going until you get back out of this to the country where such as you belong,—if there is one on earth that'll own you,—and tell them the United States is a government, a *Nation*,—by the Eternal! and don't you dare forget it again." And, stupefied, thunderstruck, Elmendorf turned and fled.

"But this is invasion! this is treason!" he gasped, as he bolted madly from the room.

CHAPTER XIV.

And these were but the advanced guard of the little army of regulars that, welcomed with glad acclaim by every law-abiding, order-loving citizen, came pouring into Chicago all through that day and for some days that followed, their very presence bringing assurance of peace and safety to thousands and thousands of anxious householders, and confusion and dismay to the leaders of the mob. Believing as had these latter that, despite the vast and valuable Federal properties in the heart of the city, despite the fact that some of the railways involved were at that very moment under the wing of the Federal courts, despite the laws of the general government affecting the working and management of every one of over a dozen great trunk lines centring in Chicago, Uncle Sam would be ass enough to confide them all to the care of State authorities notoriously dependent upon the masses, and that he would not venture to protect his property, sustain his courts, enforce his laws, demand and command respect and subordination, or even venture upon his own, except at the invitation and permission of a hesitant State government, there had been little short of triumph and exultation in the camp of the American Railway Union until this fatal July morning. Now their wrath was frantic.

And Elmendorf was madder than ever. The general and his staff reappeared in the midst of the concentration. Their coming was

announced. After vainly haranguing the stolid officials at headquarters upon the enormity of their conduct in declining to see the fearful blunder made by their President and commander-in-chief, after attempting to harangue a battalion of dusty infantry in the vague hope that, inspired by his eloquence, they might do something the enlisted men of the United States never yet have done, no matter what the temptation,—revolt against their government and join the army of the new revolution,—and being induced to desist only when summarily told to "Go on out of that! or——" while a bayonet supplied the ellipsis, poor Elmendorf flew to the station, to be the first to meet the general on his return and to open his eyes to a proper conception of law, order, and soldierly duty. Even here those minions from headquarters were ahead of him. Three or four officers were already on the spot awaiting their chief, and Elmendorf felt convinced that they had come solely to prevent his getting the ear of the commander. Even as they waited and a curious crowd began to gather, numbers of strike sympathizers among them, down the broad steps from the street above came the tramp, tramp of martial feet, and in solid column of fours, in full marching order, every man a walking arsenal of ball cartridges, a battalion of infantry filed sturdily into the grimy train-shed, formed line, facing the murmuring crowd, and then stood there in composed silence "at ease." Then the little knot of staff-officers and newspaper men was presently joined by Lieutenant-Colonel Kenyon, commanding the —th Infantry, one battalion of which had just taken position as indicated; and to him came others, officers of the battalion. Again did Elmendorf raise his voice in appeal for the rights of his fellow-men.

"Colonel Kenyon," he declaimed, his shrill tones distinctly audible above the hoarse murmur of voices in the rapidly augmenting throng, "you have been so considerate as to listen to a humble outsider before this, and to express appreciation of some, at least, of the views I have felt constrained to express. You are, as I understand, the commanding officer of the regiment that has just arrived in this city. You are an officer sworn to maintain the Constitution of the United States; and is not your very presence here—you and your men—in glaring violation of that Constitution?"

Here the few officers who had joined their commander, all strangers to Elmendorf, turned upon him in astonishment. The newspaper men chuckled and nudged each other companionably. Some of the staff turned away, plainly indicating that they had already had to listen to too much of that sort of thing. Kenyon looked him curiously over.

"Mr. Elmendorf, do you ask that question in your sober senses, or only as a jocular reminder? Those identical words were addressed to me by an irate gentleman in Virginia in '62." So far from being irritated, old Kenyon seemed to find amusement in drawing his interlocutor out.

"Ah, but, my dear sir, there the whole State—the whole South—was in armed rebellion against the Federal government. Here is neither insurrection nor rebellion. Here, honest, law-abiding, patriotic men, as loyal to the Union of States as ever you could be, are exerting

their prerogative as men, their rights as citizens, to obtain justice for themselves and their brethren at the hands of a defiant and oppressive monopoly. They have done no wrong, violated no law, and yet here you come with bayonets and ball cartridges to intimidate, if not to shoot down in cold blood, husbands and fathers and peaceable citizens who are only pleading for justice at the hands of their employers."

"Some mistake here, Mr. Elmendorf. Your leaders have already declared it a rebellion. The husbands and fathers we are here to look after are the amiable parties who stove in our car-windows and soaped our rails and let drive such pygmy projectiles as coupling-pins, a wild switch engine or two, and blazing freight-cars at us as we came in awhile ago."

"Our people are in no wise connected with that," cried Elmendorf. "All this alleged violence is the work of lawless classes whom we cannot control, or of the emissaries of the railways themselves. It has been grossly and purposely exaggerated."

"Oh! Then all this rioting is done by outsiders, not by your friends the strikers, who heartily condemn the whole business, do they?"

"Most assuredly. We have forbidden violence in any and every form."

"I see. And yet the rabble and the railway folks have insisted on it. Well, now, how grateful you ought to be to the President for ordering us here to help you suppress them! Really, Mr. Elmendorf, I am glad to find we are on the same side of this question, after all." But here a shout of laughter drowned Kenyon's words and drove Elmendorf frantic.

"You don't understand," he almost shrieked. "It is our people who are intimidated,—beaten back in the moment of victory." And then some of the crowd, now thronging the open space in front of the battalion, began to cheer. A man pushed through, handed Kenyon a telegram, and whispered a few words in his ear. Kenyon glanced quickly around upon the multitude now surging close about the group, and stepped back a few paces to read his despatch. Elmendorf followed, eager to resume his harangue. Kenyon uplifted his hand. "Pardon me now, Mr. Elmendorf. I have business to attend to." But Elmendorf was wild with excitement and wrath. He had been laughed at,—he, the mover of millions. Here were already a thousand fellow-citizens at his back, and more coming. From the freight-yards up and down the tracks, from the docks, the elevators, the neighboring saloons, they were swarming to the scene. There in double rank stood the four compact little companies of regulars in their business-like rig of blue and brown, resting on their arms, chatting in low tones, or calmly surveying from under the broad hat-brims the gathering crowd. To their right and left, up and down the long vista of train-sheds, letting themselves down from overarching bridges, or pushing boldly past the feeble railway police, hundreds of tough-looking citizens were slowly closing in. Back of the battalion, separated from it by only two tracks, were long files of passenger and Pullman cars, behind which and on whose platforms, in knots of half a dozen, other men were gathering. It was the general superintendent of the road who had

spoken to Kenyon and was now exchanging a few words with the chief quartermaster of the department. Dozens in the crowd pushed forward instantly, newspaper men as a matter of business, others from curiosity, as Kenyon opened his despatch. A burly, gray-haired major was quickly at his side, and a tall young subaltern, the adjutant of the regiment. One brief glance over the paper, and the commander turned to his right. "Clear the station," was all he said. Major Cross touched his hat, an eager light shooting across his frank, soldierly face, and strode quickly back to the line. A mere gesture brought the four company commanders to him. Not a dozen words were spoken, but in an instant the swords of the officers leaped from their scabbards, and then, obeying some low-toned commands, the right and left flank companies, simply lifting their rifle-butts enough to clear the ground, changed front to right and left respectively, thus bringing them facing the outer ends of the train-sheds. About a dozen men, led by a sergeant, broke suddenly away from the eastward flank of each of the two companies thus moved, and, without so much as an audible word, scattered away to the passenger-cars, covering a hundred yards of their length in a dozen seconds. Then under the cars dove some of the lot, up the steps sprang others, and away before them scattered the intruders. A long brick wall hemmed the yards in at the eastern side, and there, dividing into two parties in the same prompt, business-like way, the squads drove before them north or south every one of the late lookers-on, some grinning, some scowling and swearing, some remonstrating, but all going. Up from the throats of the dense throng in front of the battalion went a chorus of jeers and laughter. It is always fun to one part of a street crowd to see some other part of it, especially if it occupied a better point of view, driven from its enviable ground. The moment the space behind their new alignment was thus cleared, the flank companies each threw forward another squad of eight, which, promptly shaking itself out into a long thin rank and fixing bayonet as it went, marched straight at the thin crowds which had entered the station along the right of way. A solid platoon followed in support, and in less time than it takes to tell it the populace was on the move.

Then came the turn of the centre companies; and here a very different problem presented itself. Leading up to the street was one broad stairway in the middle of the great dépôt building, and one, somewhat narrower, a hundred feet farther north, next to the baggage-rooms. Between the tracks and the offices on this floor, enclosing a space perhaps a hundred yards in length by ten in breadth, was a high iron fence, pierced here and there with little turnstile gates, now closed, and by three or four rolling gates, the main or centre one of which stood open. This was directly opposite the broad stairway. It was this through which the battalion had marched, the newspaper men and officials had followed, and the crowd had speedily bulged. No good would result from shoving back this protruding swarm of curious or combative citizens, for the space behind the bars was packed solid. The crowd began to grin and exchange jocular remarks. It would take a long time to squeeze them back through the stairway, and meanwhile they could have lots of fun, and Elmendorf a chance for

a speech, so they began to shout for him. He was still squeaking and gesticulating about the knot of newspaper-men and staff-officers, but Kenyon, climbing on a baggage-truck, was calmly looking over the sea of upturned and often leeringly impudent faces beyond the grating. Then he called Major Cross to his side, and together they looked it over.

The crowd began to wax facetious. They knew the soldiers wouldn't shoot so long as they were not shooting. They knew they wouldn't prod with their bayonets men who manifestly couldn't get back. They thought they had the regulars, in fine, where they couldn't do a blessed thing unless the police would come and pull the crowd out from behind, and the police were not interfering with the populace just then. An American street crowd is gifted with a fine sense of humor, and the sight of these two veteran officers perched on a baggage-truck and reconnoitring their ground was full of suggestion. "Don't jump on us, major: we couldn't stand them feet!" shouted one jovial tough. "A speech from Old-Man-Afraid-Of-His-Dignity!" sang out a second. The gang guffawed, and the officers went on with their conference utterly unmoved, deaf, apparently, to the salutations. Then Kenyon climbed down and said a word to the superintendent, who nodded appreciatively. The adjutant went one way, the regimental quartermaster the other. Each took half a dozen men from the supporting platoons of the flank companies, who had by this time pushed the scattering throng beyond the yard limits and set their guards at the entrances. Then the gray-headed, white-moustached major whipped out his watch and held up his hand. There was a good deal of chaff going on, but a half-silence fell on the throng.

"All that space in there will be needed in five minutes from this time," he said, in a quiet, conversational tone. "The way out is open, and you will oblige me very much by quietly withdrawing. Begin the move back there by the main staircase, and up there also, if you please, so that these gentlemen who are crowded in here can follow you. Move at once, and you'll be out in plenty of time."

Not a few on the ontskirts did begin subordinately to move away, and a dozen or more were already going up the steps, when the crowd gave tongue. "Come back, there. Stay where you are. We've got as much right here as they have," were the cries. And then the luckless Elmendorf was seized with an inspiration. Bounding upon a baggage-truck, he waved his hat and shouted, "Hear me, fellow-citizens. You have said right. We have indeed more right here than these——" But here a muscular hand grasped him by the seat of his trousers, and Elmendort's speech wound up in a shriek, as he was lifted backward off the truck, a big Irish sergeant glowering at him as he landed him on *terra firma*. "I yield to force," screamed Elmendorf. "Go and tell it." And then between a couple of brawny, unsympathetic soldiers he was rushed back, and, in the twinkling of an eye, hustled into the smoking-compartment of a vacant Pullman and there locked in, with a bayonet at the window. For a moment the throng howled, but there was no forward impulse. The motionless line of the two centre com-

panies seemed to have a soothing effect, and still the major coolly stood there, watch in hand. Two minutes passed, three, and not ten men of the crowd had slipped away. Certain railway men and reporters edged forward, away from the crowd. Certain of the crowd strove to follow, but some men in plain clothing whipped open their coats, displaying silver stars, and warned them back. Three minutes and a half, and still the major stood calmly glancing over the crowd and then at his watch, and then the corners of his mouth began to twitch, for he had cast one quick glance up and down the line of that iron fence. Unreeling something behind them as they reappeared, the squads that had followed the regimental staff officers quickly trotted into sight again at the upper and lower ends of the pen, and the outskirts of the crowd "caught on" at a glance. They were manning the hose. Already the gleaming nozzles were being screwed on, and the humor of the situation became suddenly clouded. "Watch out!" was the cry from both ends of the dense mass. Dozens of men at the north end who could readily escape were already in rush for the upper stairway, but those at the south were less lucky. A dense mass of fellow-citizens was wedged between them and the exits, but rapidly the alarm was spreading inward from the flanks. "Four minutes," said the major, grimly, though his lips were twitching like mad. Then the upturned faces began to blanch, the crowd to heave and swell, and a backward sway sent a hundred or more surging up the main staircase. The next minute panic seemed to seize on all, for the jeers gave way to shouts of fright and pain as men were squeezed breathless in the crush; and then, tumbling over one another's heels, climbing one another's backs in sheep-like terror, they fought for air and escape, and the last coat-tails went streaming up the stairs sharp on time, as Kenyon said, with the bayonets of the left centre company threateningly close in their wake.

Once out in the open street, they strove to rally and encourage one another and to shower defiance and stones at their assailants; but these latter contented themselves with clearing a space for carriages about the doors and calmly stationing their guards to hold it; and when, a few moments later, the general's special train came steaming in, Elmendorf raged in vain. There was neither orator nor deputation to meet him on behalf of the strike-leaders. Not until after the chief had driven away in his carriage was the agitator released from the hated confines of the Pullman and bidden to go his way. Fuming with the indignity of his position, he left, vowing that he would return if there was law in the land, backed with warrants for the arrest of Kenyon for felonious assault and false imprisonment; and Kenyon smiled and said the warrant wouldn't surprise him in the least.

And then followed the stirring scenes of a riot week that showed not only the depth and extent of the insurrectionary spirit among the unlettered masses of the people, but also the wisdom of the President in ordering the prompt concentration of regular troops in the heart of the threatened city. Silently, in disciplined order, the various detachments had marched to their stations. Silently, in disciplined order, puny in point of numbers as compared with the vast mob of their howling

antagonists, they faced the throng, grimly peering from under their slouched hat-brims, gripping with their brown, sinewy hands the muzzles of the old trusty rifles, listening with utter amaze, with tingling nerves, to the furious yells of "Down with the government!" "To hell with the United States!" and wondering how long their fathers would have stood such treason thirty years ago. Calm, grim, and silent, conscious of their power, merciful in their strength, superb in their disdain of insult, their contempt of danger, their indifference to absolute outrage,—for maddened men showered the ranks with mud and gravel, and foul-mouthed, slatternly women—vile, unclean harpies of the slums—dipped their brooms in the reeking gutters and slashed their filth into the stern, soldierly faces,—for hours, for days, they coolly held that misguided, drink-crazed, demagogue-excited mob at bay, reopening railways, protecting trains, escorting Federal officials, forcing passage after passage through the turbulent districts, until the fury of the populace wore itself out against the rock of their iron discipline, and one after another the last of the rioters slunk to their holes, unharmed by even one avenging shot. Fire and flame had wrought their havoc, miles of railway lines and cars had been wrecked and ruined, but otherwise the mad-brained effort had utterly failed of its purpose, and for the third time had the regulars stood almost the sole bulwark between the great city and absolute anarchy. True, the regiments of the National Guard were at last ordered into service, but not until after the presence of the Federal force had given assurance that, whether the State officials liked it or not, the general government would tolerate such insurrection no longer. True, the State troops stood ready, eager to do their work, and some of them, at least, so capable, so drilled and disciplined, that, left to the orders of their own officers, they could and would have suppressed the riots. But, there was the difference, even when called into action the most reliable and experienced of the regimental commanders were practically deprived of their commands; their regiments were broken up into pygmy detachments and scattered hither and thither by companies and squads, covering sometimes a tract of suburbs fifteen miles long and half as wide, while the entire force was placed under the orders of a city official notoriously in sympathy with the initial strike and seeking the suffrages of the very class from which the mobs were drawn. The extraordinary spectacle was seen of a veteran colonel with only half a company to guard the head-quarters of the regiment in a remote and dangerous spot, and absolutely forbidden to summon any of his own regiment to his defence in case of emergency, except upon the advice and consent of some official of the city police. Well was it for Chicago and the nation that the President of the United States stood as unmoved by the puerile protests of the demagogue in office as were his loyal soldiery by the fury of insult, abuse, and violence heaped upon them by that mob of demagogue-supporters.

"By heaven," said the editor of a great daily to old Kenyon at the close of the week, "I never dreamed of such superb discipline, and under such foul insult. I swear I don't see how you fellows could stand it."

"Oh," said Kenyon, grimly, "it wasn't half as hard to bear as what your columns have been saying about us any time these last five years."

CHAPTER XV.

When the President of the United States declined to withdraw the regulars from Chicago as urged by the governor of Illinois, Mr. Elmendorf decided that it was because he had not been heard from on the subject, and so started for Washington. This was how it happened that he abandoned his project of leading his friends and fellow-citizens in their determined assault upon the serried ranks of capital, backed though they were by "the bristling bayonets of a usurper." For several days his deluded disciples looked for him in vain. The telegraphic despatches of the Associated Press told briefly of another crank demanding audience at the White House, claiming to represent the people of Chicago and persisting in his demand until, "yielding to force," he was finally ejected. But Elmendorf was silent upon this episode when he returned, so the story could hardly have referred to him. Calling at Allison's to attend to the long-deferred duty of packing his trunk, he was informed by the butler that that labor had been spared him and that he would find all his things at his former lodging-place, Mrs. Wallen's. Going thither to claim them, he was met at the threshold by Mart, whose face was gaunt and white and worn, and who no sooner caught sight of the once revered features of the would-be labor leader than he fell upon them with his fists and fragmentary malediction. Mart battered and thumped, while Elmendorf backed and protested. It was a policeman, one of that body whom ever since '86 Elmendorf had loved to designate as "blood-hounds of the rich man's laws," who lifted Mart off his prostrate victim, and Mrs. McGrath who partially raised the victim to his feet. No sooner, however, had she recognized him than she loosed her hold, flopped him back into the gutter, and, addressing the policeman, bade him "Fur the love of hivvin set him on again!" which the policeman declined to do, despite Mrs. McGrath's magnificent and descriptive denunciation, addressed to the entire neighborhood, in which Elmendorf's personal character and professional career came in for glowing and not altogether inaccurate portrayal. Slowly the dishevelled scholar found his legs, Mart making one more effort to break away from the grasp of the law and renew the attack before he was led to the station-house, where, however, he had not long to languish before a major of cavalry rode up and bailed him out; but by that time, and without his luggage, the victim of his wrath had disappeared. "There's three weeks' board ag'in' it," said Mrs. McGrath, "and the ould lady not buried three days, and the young lady sick and cryin' her purty eyes out, and divil a cint or sup in the house for Mart's wife and babies, barrin' what me and Mac could spare 'em. Och, that's only wan of five-and-twinty families that furrin loonattic has ruined."

At the camp of his squadron Major Cranston had been informed by his veteran, McGrath, of the reappearance of Elmendorf, and of

the arrest of Mart for spoiling his beauty. Mac also told something of the straits to which Mart's family were reduced. Mrs. Mac had known Mrs. Mart in the days when, as a blooming school-girl, the latter used to trip by the Cranston homestead, and had striven to aid her through the failing fortunes of the months preceding Mart's last strike; it was her voluble account of the state of affairs that prompted this soft-hearted squadron commander to take Mart by the hand and bid him tell his troubles. Mart broke down. He'd been a fool and a dupe, he knew and realized it, but Elmendorf had so preached about his higher destiny and the absolute certainty of triumph and victory if they but made one grand concerted effort, that he had staked all on the result, and lost it. He knew it was all up with the strikers when once the general government said stop, and so had gone home, to be greeted by the tidings that his mother was sick unto death. Jenny was there, calm, brave, silent, full of resource, but, oh, so pale and wan! She had employed the best physician to be had, but she alone would be nurse. She never reproached, never chided him for his long absence when most needed. Then had followed a few days of sorrow and suspense, and then the gentle, harmless, helpless, purposeless life fluttered away. Jenny paid all the bills, the doctor, the undertaker, everything, and Mart tried vainly to get some work; but he was a marked man. Then, the day after Jenny had settled up everything and made herself some simple mourning garb, she went to resume her duties at the library, and came back in a little while, white and ill, and she had been very ill since,—out of her head at times, he believed, said Mart, and he had gone and got the doctor whom she had employed for her mother, a kind fellow who had been unremitting in his attentions, and who told him bluntly to shut up when he talked about not knowing where the money was to come from to pay him, and said that that little woman was worth ten times her weight in gold, which, said Mart, was God's truth, as he himself ought to have had sense enough to know before.

Little by little, as they walked homeward together, Cranston's orderly riding with the horses along the street, and dozens of people turning curiously to gaze at the cavalry officer and the late striker, it began to dawn upon Cranston that Mart's sister, who was worth so much more than her weight in gold, was the very Miss Wallen who had been so oddly unwilling to write at his dictation the letter to Elmendorf. Arrived at the house, he was sure of it, for there, with solemn face, was Mr. Wells. "My wife," said he, "is up-stairs, trying to see what she can do. This is Martin Wallen, is it?—Well, Martin, I regret exceedingly to hear you assaulted Mr. Elmendorf to-day—and didn't kill him."

Manifestly Mr. Wells was not a proper person for the position he held, being far too impulsive in speech for a bookish man; but then Wells had been sorely tried. He told Cranston something of it as they walked away together after loading Mart with provisions and fruit at the corner grocery. Together they stopped to see Dr. Francis and have a brief chat with him about his patient, and then Cranston mounted and rode thoughtfully back to camp at the lake front. Captain Davies, with his troop, had just returned from a long day's dusty,

dirty, exasperating duty at the stock-yards, and no sooner had he made his brief report than the major queried, "Do you happen to know whether Forrest is back with his regiment?"

"He was commanding his company at the yards to-day, sir. I heard he returned four days ago."

"H'm!" said the major, reflectively: "I think I'll stroll over to-night and find Kenyon."

They were both sons of Chicago, these two field officers, and had always been close friends. Forrest, however, was a New Yorker, many years their junior in the service. Cranston had liked him well, yet now he felt that he should be glad to consult Kenyon, who had known him still longer, for that which he had heard from Wells as they walked to the doctor's filled him with vague anxiety. In common with most society people, Cranston shared the belief that, if not actually engaged to Florence Allison, Forrest certainly would be as soon as old Allison's objections were removed; but in speaking of the probable cause of Miss Wallen's illness Wells had used some vehement language. Plainly the librarian told Cranston of the stormy interview between Allison and himself, in which, in presence of Mr. Waldo and "that man Elmendorf," Allison had demanded her discharge. Plainly he told him his own views of Miss Wallen's character and conduct, and what his wife thought of her,—that she was a girl to be honored and admired and respected above her kind; "but," said he, "Mr. Forrest always treated her as though he thought so too, and it may be that she learned to care for him before she had heard about his being a suitor for the hand of Miss Allison. I sent the girl who was temporarily occupying her place back into the library when we had our talk," said Wells, "but I reckon she didn't go beyond the passage-way and heard pretty much the whole thing. Allison bellowed, like the bull he is, and perhaps I did, too. Still, it hadn't occurred to me to question her on the subject, though I was minded to tell her if she had heard anything she was on no account to repeat it or any part of it; but Miss Wallen came back to her desk sooner than I expected, and the moment this young minx hesitatingly told me she had been here and had gone home I suspected something, and presently pumped the whole truth out of her. The contemptible meanness of some women passes all my descriptive powers. There are several girls employed in the library, and it seems some of them were jealous of Miss Wallen, or rather of her superior position, and one evening that fellow Elmendorf got in there and threatened her with exposure or something of the kind and insulted her, so that she slapped his face, and two of those library girls heard it. It happened just before Forrest came in, and he found her all quivering and unstrung. She was to have finished some work for him that evening, and he was to have dined at Allison's, but she was so broken up it was some time before she could go on with it. Neither could she tell him the cause. Well, it was one of these very girls whom, all unthinkingly, I had put in her place, and what does the little wretch do the morning that Jeannette returned but tell her all about Allison's row with me, and his demand and reasons for her discharge! Of course she didn't tell of my refusal; she says she didn't happen to hear that, which is a lie, I

reckon. However, that's the big, big last pound that broke the heart of that poor hard-working, long-suffering girl and sent her home a sick woman. Francis says she'll pull through; but what do you suppose will come of it even then?" Wells told him more about poor Jenny, all the story of her long, brave struggle so far as he knew it, which was far less than the facts, and Cranston wished with all his heart that Meg, his own bonny wife, were home to help and counsel. All the same he meant to see Kenyon, and later, perhaps, Forrest.

But he saw the latter first.

There was a brilliant gathering at the club that night. Matters had so quieted down in the disturbed districts that many of the regular officers had been permitted to accept invitations to be present. Allison had not wished to go, but Florence begged. She was looking "absolutely saffron," said Aunt Lawrence, and if something wasn't done to break up that child's nervous melancholy she wouldn't be responsible for her. That she herself was in the faintest degree responsible for the alleged nervous melancholy Aunt Lawrence would not have admitted for a moment. Allison was in evil humor, as is many a better man when beginning to realize that he has made an ass of himself. Wells had been after him with a hot stick on discovering that the only authority for his accusations against Miss Wallen was "that devil's tool Elmendorf and a creature of his own coaching." Allison knew, moreover, that Forrest was back, commanding a company of his regiment, for his own associates were pouring into his ears their praises of Forrest's nerve and calm courage in facing with only twenty men a furious mob of nearly a thousand and rescuing some so-called "scabs" from their hands, poor fellows who had been pulled from the platforms of the P. Q. & R. trains. "He's 'way down below the stock-yards, anyhow, and won't be there to-night," said Allison to himself: so, at ten o'clock, with Florence on his arm, he entered the brilliantly lighted parlor. It was full of well-gowned women and of men in the appropriate garb of the hour and occasion, while not a few of the officers were in uniform. The general and some of his staff were almost the first to greet them. Presently Mr. Sloan joined the party, and the first thing he did was to begin telling of Forrest's prediction as to the attitude of the general government in the event of trouble. Allison shifted uncomfortably, the general and his aides looked politely interested, and somebody attempted to make some arch remark for Miss Allison's ears, but she was plainly nervous and ill at ease. The chief presently presumed Miss Florence had heard how admirably Forrest had behaved in the rescue of certain railway men from the mob the previous day, and Florence owned that she had heard nothing at all,—it was the first intimation she had that Forrest was there; whereat the three officers looked astonished and embarrassed. Evidently something was amiss. There had perhaps been a quarrel. "Oh," said Captain Morris, in prompt explanation, "Forrest was away down in the depths of Oklahoma when he heard his regiment was ordered here, and he had to wait for telegraphic authority to come on. He never even got up into town. His company was at Grand Crossing, and he joined it there. He hasn't been north of the stock-yards since."

But Allison got away as quickly as possible. This sort of thing wasn't helping Flo to forget, and presently Flo herself concluded she'd rather go home, and just at eleven o'clock they came forth to their carriage. Three officers in full uniform were directly in front, chatting with two others in rough campaign rig, and the taller, slenderer of these latter, a soldierly, brown-eyed fellow with a heavy moustache and a week-old brown stubble on cheeks and chin, stepped quickly forward and whipped off his drab slouch hat. For the first time in her life Florence Allison saw her friend the lieutenant in service dress, and knew not what to say. All the response to his cordial "Good-evening, Miss Allison. How are you, Mr. Allison?" was the hurried hustling past of the pair, the girl with averted head, the father reddening and embarrassed. Florence was bundled quickly into the carriage, and then Allison turned. "You'll have to excuse my daughter to-night, Mr. Forrest. She isn't well, and—er—er—I'll hope to see you to-morrow." And, lifting his hat, he followed Florence. The door was slammed, and away they went, leaving Forrest gazing after them in no pleasant frame of mind.

Major Cranston touched his arm. "Come over to my tent, Forrest. I can explain something of this," he said.

And the next morning, after some sleepless hours, with permission from Colonel Kenyon to be absent from camp until noon, Mr. Forrest took a cab and drove far up town, making only one stop—at a florist's—on the way. The Allison carriage was coming forth just as he reached the well-known gates. Mrs. Lawrence and Florence, seated therein, did not catch sight of the occupant of the cab until he raised his hat. Florence gasped, grabbed Aunt Lawrence by the arm, called to their coachman, and glanced back.

But no, Mr. Forrest had no thought of stopping there at all. The cab drove straight on past the Allison homestead, and something told her whither it was bound.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mr. Allison did not meet Lieutenant Forrest that day as he had "hoped to." He did not hope to at all. He hoped not to for several days, and a very uncomfortable man he was. Forrest, however, seemed making no effort to find him, as the millionaire rather expected him to do. Forrest's duties were somewhat confining, and Allison even kept away from his pet club awhile, dreading to meet with officers who were being entertained there at all hours. The Lambert was another place that for a while he religiously avoided. He was becoming afraid of Wells. It gave him a queer feeling, however, when driving home to luncheon one day, to see an orderly holding two officers' horses opposite the private entrance, and Cranston and Forrest in conversation with Mr. Wells. They were absorbed and did not look up, but something told Allison there was trouble ahead for him. Even his friend Waldo had been embarrassed and constrained in his presence. He made up his mind to stop and see Wells that very afternoon, and did

so, bursting in in his fine old English manner. After fidgeting a few moments until Wells had had his stenographer (acting) withdraw, he impetuously began:

"Hum—haw—Wells, tell me about that girl. How's she getting on?"

"If by 'that girl,' Allison, you mean Miss Wallen, she's not getting on at all. A lady who is robbed of her mother, her health, her good name, and threatened with the loss of her means of livelihood, at one fell swoop, cannot be expected to get on."

"Mr. Wells, I don't like the tone which you assume towards me."

"Mr. Allison, I shouldn't like it if you did."

For one moment Allison stared at the librarian, and Wells glared unflinchingly back. The magnate was mad in earnest now. "By God! Mr. Wells, you're the only man in this city who dares treat me with disrespect, and I won't have it."

"By gad, Mr. Allison, it's because I'm probably the only one who thoroughly knows you. Wait till I tell all about your demands regarding Miss Wallen, and you'll find others in plenty."

"You can't, without looking elsewhere for a position."

"I can, for the position is looking for me, and the only reason I haven't accepted it is that I mean to stay right here until full justice has been done my stenographer,—full justice, sir. If that young lady were to place this case in the hands of even a tolerable lawyer, yours wouldn't have a leg to stand on."

"You don't mean she's going to law!"

"It's what my wife says would serve you right; and I agree with her. Just let this community know that solely on the statements of a cur you kicked out of your own employ you had defamed that brave, honest girl, and there'd be a tempest about your head compared to which this riot was a zephyr."

Allison's wrath was cooling now. He sank back in a chair and stared gloomily at the librarian. "Where is that" (gulp) "Elmendorf?" he finally asked.

"In jail, I hope; in the gutter, the last time I heard of him, being pommelled by her brother. Major Cranston and Mr. Forrest are looking for him."

"What do they want?" asked Allison, suspiciously.

"Several things; one is to find out how much he will admit having told you, and how much to hold you solely responsible for."

Allison fidgeted for a moment, and then turned again upon the librarian. "You mean to tell me that you think she's entirely good and honest and all that, do you?"

"No. I told you I knew she was."

"Well, then, what does it mean that Forrest is trying to hunt up or run down my witnesses?"

"It simply means that he's a gentleman who intends to defend the girl whose name you have coupled with his."

"Why don't he come to me? He hasn't been near my house since he came back," said Allison, in a tone of complaint. "He hasn't given me a chance to—fix things. Who was fool enough to tell him?"

"You, principally, by your reception of him. He knew all about it before he came here to me. Of course he hasn't been to your house, and probably never will go there again. I wouldn't, in his place."

Allison pondered painfully awhile. "Well, I suppose this thing is beginning to get around the neighborhood?—people are talking about it?" he queried, guardedly.

"Beginning?" was the answer. "Lord, no! It began the day you shouted the whole business so that everybody in the library could hear. Of course people are talking, but not as loud as you did."

"And you say she's down sick and can't see people. Of course if I've been—made a victim of in this matter by that fellow Elmendorf—why, damn him, he's been trying to make up to my own daughter! she had to order him out of the house,—of course I want to straighten things out. I withdraw my demand for her discharge, under the circumstances; and if I might send her a check—or something, in reason——"

"You might, if you wanted to see how quick it would come back."

"Why, hang it, Wells, what *should* a man do? What can a man do?"

"Sit down and write her that you have made a consummate ass of yourself. That might not be a delicate way out of it, but it would be telling the truth. Anyhow, you've got to do something, and that right soon. My wife tells me that her one idea is to get well enough to come over here for one day, just to confront her accusers. Then where'll you be, and your invaluable witnesses?"

Allison went home and had a conference with his sister which left that lady dissolved in tears. It was a brutally hot July afternoon, and he ordered the carriage for a drive in the Park and bade Florence drive with him, and obediently she went. There wasn't a whiff of breeze off the lake; it all came pouring from the hot prairies to the southwest, and everybody looked languid and depressed. The sun was almost down, and the walks and roadways in the Park were but sparsely occupied. Slowly the heavy family carriage rolled along the smooth macadam and drew up, with others of its kind, near a shaded kiosk where a band was playing. Presently from under her parasol Florence caught sight of a familiar figure. Leaning against the door of an open livery carriage, a tall man in straw hat and white duck suit was chatting with the occupants, one a middle-aged woman, with a gentle, motherly face, the other a slender girl in deep mourning, reclining languidly as though propped on cushions. Allison, anxiously watching his daughter, saw the light in her eyes, the faint color rising in her cheeks; and he, too, looked, then reddened, for all that other party seemed to face him at the instant. The tall man in duck came promptly around and stood beside them, bowing coldly to the father, but raising his hat and holding out his hand to Florence. She took it, her eyes not downcast, but seeking his.

"I am glad to see you out, Miss Allison," he said, in frank and cordial tone. "You were looking far from—yourself the night we met in front of the club. I hope you are well?"

"I am—better," she answered, rather faintly, "and I had hoped to see you—before this."

"That was why I went to the club that night," he answered, gravely. "How is Cary?"

"Oh, he's just miserable, because pa—father kept him cooped up and wouldn't let him out to the riots. He was simply mad when he heard of your experience with the mob. But you are coming to see us?" she finished, looking appealingly at her father.

"Yes, Forrest," said Allison, "I wish you would. There's a matter I want to talk to you about."

"Possibly the same that Mr. Elmendorf is to bring up at department head-quarters to-morrow afternoon, which I believe you will be invited to hear," said Forrest, calmly. Then, turning once more to Florence, he held forth his hand. "I am very glad to meet you again, Miss Allison," he said, "and to find you looking better. But now I must return to my friends." And, bowing again to her, but almost ignoring Allison, he walked away, and was soon in earnest talk with the ladies in the open carriage.

"Do you know who they are?" asked Florence presently of her father.

"Yes. One is Mrs. Wells, wife of our librarian. The other is a Miss Wallen, one of the library employees. She has been ill.—Go on, Parks," he said to his coachman, and they drove silently home.

"He came and talked with me," said Florence to her aunt that night. "He was polite and kind, and didn't seem angry,—didn't say anything, but—he went—he said he must go to his friends,—to his *friends*, do you understand? We're no longer—no longer of them." Then she turned and sought her own room.

And there was an invitation for Mr. Allison,—a very pressing invitation, for an aide-de-camp delivered it personally,—a request that Mr. Allison should be at head-quarters the next afternoon at four o'clock; and Allison went. He was received by Captain Morris, who expressed the general's regrets at being unable to see him in person, and was ushered into a room where were Colonel Kenyon, Major Cranston, and Lieutenant Forrest, still in service dress, and two of the senior staff-officers. These latter came forward and shook hands with the magnate, the others simply bowed.

"See if Mr. Elmendorf is anywhere about," said Captain Morris to a messenger. But it was ten minutes before that intellectual party appeared. The great strike had collapsed, the leaders were under the indictment of the law, and this particular agitator's occupation, like that of hundreds of his hapless dupes, was gone. Nevertheless it pleased him to lurk about the neighborhood until fifteen minutes after the appointed time, so that he might be the last to arrive and might thereby keep the so-called upper classes waiting. The moment he arrived the chief of staff proceeded to business.

"You set four o'clock as the time you would appear to make your charges, Mr. Elmendorf, and we've been waiting here a quarter of an hour."

"Affairs of greater importance, sir, occupied my time."

"Oh, yes; our janitor tells us that you have been communing with yourself over a glass of beer in the saloon across the way for the last

hour.—Gentlemen, I received a letter from Mr. Elmendorf yesterday morning, which I will read:

"'SIR,—Having been informed that Mr. Warren Starkey, a clerk in your employ, has been discharged because of his having been accused of revealing to the press certain facts relative to the circumstances under which Lieutenant Forrest was twice ordered away from Chicago, this is to inform you that unless Mr. Starkey is immediately reinstated I shall consider it my duty, as an accredited correspondent of numerous newspapers of high repute, to publish all the facts in the case as well known to me, and to demand the dismissal of Lieutenant Forrest. That you may know I speak by the card, I purpose calling at your office at four P.M. to-morrow, at which time, if you see fit, the gentleman and those he may claim as his friends can hear the grounds on which I base my demand. Let the laws which oppress the poor and friendless now apply to the proud and powerful.

"'MAX ELMENDORF.'

"Now, Mr. Elmendorf, Mr. Starkey has been discharged, and has not been reinstated. We'll hear him first, and then you."

"Very good, sir. Though I seem to be alone in the lions' den, I shall not flinch from my duty even in the face of all this array that has been carefully selected from among mine enemies."

"They are exactly as indicated by yourself," coldly answered the colonel. "Send in Starkey."

And Starkey came,—Elmendorf's one weak victim among the head-quarters force,—and Starkey was in a sorry plight. He told his story ruefully:

"I supposed this gentleman was all right. I used to see him with the officers. He was with them every day or two for hours. Then he made himself pleasant and sociable, and used to get me to lunch, or treat to drinks sometimes, and seemed to know everything that was going on. I didn't know anything whatever about Mr. Forrest's affairs except what he told me from time to time, and I believed what he told. Perhaps I did let on I knew more. He got me to drinking, and God only knows how it all came about. That reporter came to me and said that Mr. Elmendorf had told him this and that and Captain Morris had told him more, and then he got things up around the Lambert and around Forrest's lodgings, and asked me if 'twasn't so that Forrest had been ordered off on account of things happening there. Well, I suppose perhaps I did say that it was so, but I never dreamed that he'd make what he did of it. And then when the chief clerk caught me drunk and accused me of the whole thing I broke down and owned up to everything, and I've been a—well, I've just been that man's dupe."

The unhappy ex-clerk was withdrawn. Mr. Elmendorf cleared his throat in readiness to speak. Forrest, with a smouldering fire in his eyes and with compressed lips, sat gazing sternly at the ex-tutor. The others, with faces indicative of various shades of contempt and indifference or indignation, not unmingled with the curiosity which one

feels in studying some uncommon type of animal or man, silently awaited his remarks. "I will begin by saying that my suspicions in this case were aroused long months ago," said Elmendorf, when the judge-advocate of the department suavely spoke:

"Kindly spare us your suspicions, Mr. Elmendorf. You promised facts, and, as time is short, owing to your own delay, we desire facts alone."

"The facts," said Elmendorf, nettled, "are that the gentleman in question, while posing as a man of honor and a welcome guest in a most estimable family circle, has long been secretly laying siege to the affections of a young and comparatively friendless girl, with such success that their relations became the talk of the neighborhood. I found that she had been seen at his lodgings after dark, that they were frequently seen alone together as late as midnight, and that they were often alone in the private rooms at the Lambert. These facts were so well known that when he was suddenly ordered to leave Chicago last winter the explanation arrived at by common consent was that the general sent him off to his regiment to avert further scandal, and that his second orders were for practically the same reason. It is notorious that because of this affair the girl has been threatened with discharge from the position she holds, and so I am here to say that since this poor clerk and this poor girl are made the sufferers and the only ones, I, as the ever ready representative of the people, demand the prompt punishment of the real offender, whom doubtless his class would shield. Nothing but my dislike of involving a poor working girl in further scandal and trouble has held me silent until now."

"I see," said the judge-advocate, reflectively; "and you have intimated that in order to spare her further publicity you would be willing to abandon your purpose, provided——?"

"Provided Mr. Forrest tender his immediate and unconditional resignation from the service, and I be furnished written assurance that it will be accepted, also admission that my statement as to the cause of his sudden orders to leave Chicago was true."

The scene in the office that sultry afternoon was something to remember long days after. Cranston couldn't help thinking what a blessing it was that the breeze at last was blowing fresh from the lake and the white caps were bounding beyond the breakwater. It was a group worthy of a painter's brush,—Elmendorf's sublime confidence in the criminality of his fellow-man and the unassailable integrity of his own position, Kenyon's attitude of close and appreciative study of this unique specimen, Cranston's twitching lips and clinching fists, Allison's almost apoplectic face at one moment, contrasting oddly with the infinite consternation with which he contemplated his own probable connection with the plot the next:—the speaker was a monument of conceit and "cheek,"—might even be a lunatic, but what—what could be said of himself? The chief of staff was fuming. Forrest was inwardly raging, yet by a strong effort maintained, as he had agreed, utter silence, leaving to his friends their own method of conducting the affair. One officer alone seemed to be deriving entertainment from

the situation: the judge-advocate had never had a professional treat to compare with it.

"Before committing ourselves to any promise, Mr. Elmendorf," said he, most blandly, "you will pardon me if I refer to what seems a trifle weak in your chain of evidence. You say the young lady was in the habit of visiting Mr. Forrest's lodgings. How often have you seen her there?"

"I said she was seen there. I did not keep watch."

"On Mr. Forrest's *lodgings*, no. But how often was she seen there?"

"I am not prepared to state. Once is considered enough, I venture to say."

"How often did the witness tell *you* she was there, Mr. Allison?" asked the judge-advocate, turning, to his consternation, upon that gentleman.

Allison went crimson in an instant. "Well, I paid so little attention. It was all so frivolous," he stammered.

"Yet he was the witness named by Mr. Elmendorf, I believe,—the only one; and you had him come to your office and you questioned him there, did you not?"

"I did, yes, but the impression passed away almost immediately. The man wasn't worthy of confidence."

"When you hear his story you may think otherwise," said Elmendorf, with a sneer.

"I have heard," said the judge-advocate; "but we'll hear it again. —Send Starkey's friend in here," he said to the messenger; and presently in came a hangdog, corner-loafer specimen of the shabby-genteel young man, supremely impudent on his native heath, but wofully ill at ease now. "This is your reputable witness, Mr. Elmendorf."

"I protest against indignity to my witnesses or browbeating of any kind. This is not a court, and he's not on oath."

"Certainly not. He's saved us all the trouble by telling the truth beforehand.—Now you can tell us how you came to chase the young lady into that door-way," said the judge-advocate, turning suddenly on the shrinking new-comer.

"Well, sir, I'd been drinking, and I thought she was—a girl I knew."

"Yes? and when you caught her in the vestibule what happened?"

"Nothin' much. She fought, and the door flew open, and——" here the shifting eyes wandered around until they rested on Forrest—"this gentleman kicked me out. I wouldn't 'a' said anything about it, only—him there found me afterwards." And he nodded at Elmendorf.

"Didn't you declare to me you'd seen the lady going in there with him? Didn't you see them together late at night up near her own home?" asked Elmendorf, excitedly.

"Well, you took me up and showed 'em to me."

"Didn't you tell me you knew she often went to his rooms?"

"Well, you asked me if I hadn't seen her, and I said no, and then you asked if I didn't think it was more'n likely, and——" Here Starkey's friend faltered.

"That will do," said the judge-advocate. "You both knew very

well then, and you know now, that it is an apartment-house, in which several families dwell, some of them friends of the young lady in question. You can go, young man.—I merely introduced that party as a specimen of the evidence for the prosecution. Now, Mr. Elmendorf, let me give you a specimen of the evidence for the defence.—Colonel," said he to the chief of staff, "would you mind saying in the presence of these gentlemen whether the faintest inkling of any such charge as this of Mr. Elmendorf's against Mr. Forrest had ever reached you?"

"Not a whisper."

"Were Mr. Forrest's sudden orders in any way the result of any such rumor?"

"Not in the least. He was selected by the general to make certain confidential investigations regarding the encroachments of settlers, boomers, etc., on the Oklahoma tract. It was necessary that the object should not be heralded beforehand by the press, and so we had to keep it quiet."

"There, Mr. Elmendorf; admitting these as specimen bricks of the probable testimony, we decline to reinstate the clerk, or to attach the slightest importance to your allegations at the expense of Mr. Forrest, and I am constrained to say that your propensity for meddling has got you into a nasty mess. So far as head-quarters are concerned, we've done with you. Now I'll leave you to settle with the friends of the young lady." Here Elmendorf made for the door.

"I'm not to be assaulted, and——" he began; but Allison blocked the way.

"You lied to me and mine," he cried. "You declared on your honor that gentlemen high in authority in this office told you the reasons you gave for Mr. Forrest's summary orders to quit Chicago. I demand now to know whether it was not that poor devil whom you've ruined here,—Starkey. Answer me."

"What good would it do?" whined Elmendorf, shrugging his shoulders. "Would not my statement be promptly denied? *Noblesse oblige*, sir; the first business of these Knights of the Sword is to stand together, and woe betide the knave who dare accuse one of them. But if you'll be guided by my advice, Mr. Allison, you'll look well to your own vine and fig-tree, lest the despoiler——"

But here Allison hurled himself upon the fellow and grasped him by the throat. "You whelp!" he cried, banging the luckless head against the door-post before any one could interfere. In an instant, however, the officers had seized him, shaking the tutor loose. Madly sped the latter to the elevator, but, finding Starkey and his crestfallen friend awaiting him there, he turned and dashed down the stairway, his ex-witnesses after him.

For a moment there was silence in the office, while Allison recovered breath. Bowing coldly to him, Colonel Kenyon, with Cranston and Forrest, turned to leave the room.

"Mr. Forrest," said the magnate, stepping hastily forward, "I am more rejoiced at your vindication than I can say. Of course I see I've been led into doing you an injustice, and I hope you'll permit me to make amends."

But Forrest declined the outstretched hand and thrust his own within the breast of his uniform.

"You have amends to make elsewhere, Mr. Allison," he answered, with lips that trembled despite his efforts at control, "and a wrong to right beside which mine is insignificant. Good-day, sir."

And so they left him.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE regulars were gradually withdrawn from the Garden City, as old-timers loved to call Chicago, and Kenyon with his sturdy battalion was among the first to be restored to his own station. The crusty veteran left the home of his boyhood to resume duty at his proper post, and left with feelings somewhat mixed. "We never had more temper-trying work to do," said he, "and there isn't a man in the whole regiment that wouldn't rather stand six months Indian-fighting than six hours mobbing in Chicago. It's my own old home, so I've got a right to speak the truth about it. For years its newspapers, with one exception, have made it a point to sneer at, vilify, and hold up to public execration the officers of the regular army. During the past four or five years the lampooning and lying have been redoubled, and it is like heaping coals of fire on their heads that the very regiment they have abused the most was the most conspicuous in Chicago's defence. *We* had no picnic, but the Fifteenth simply had hell and repeat, —the meanest, most trying, most perilous duty, from first to last. Those fellows were scattered in little detachments all over Cook County, and faced fifty times their weight in toughs, and carried out their orders and stood all manner of foul abuse and never avenged it, when if any one of those young captains or lieutenants commanding detachments had lost his temper and let drive the lightning sleeping in those brown Springfields, there'd 'a' been a cleaning out of the rabble that would have thinned the ranks of one political party in our blessed country, at least. Oh, we're glad enough to get away and see the change of tone in the Chicago press; but it won't last."

And Kenyon's was by no means an exaggerated statement. In the far-spreading course of the great strike "the regulars" came in for many a hard knock from the mob and for not a few from the press. At one point experienced railway-hands, not mere ruffian rioters, wrecked the track at a trestle in front of a coming troop train, hurling the engine, with its gallant guard of half a dozen artillerymen, into the depths below, crushing or drowning them like rats. At another point, when baffled in their efforts to overturn a sleeping-car in front of a patrol engine, and dispersed by a dozen well-aimed shots, the rioters impanelled their coroner's jury, and declared the red-handed participants innocent spectators and the officer and his men murderers. At a third, when a great railway centre was found in the hands of the strikers and the troops were ordered to clear the platform, one surly specimen not only refused to budge, but lavished on the captain commanding the foulest epithets in a blackguard's vocabulary. The crowd outnumbered the

troops by twenty to one. The faintest irresolution or hesitancy would have been fatal. One whack with the sword knocked the fight out of the bully, and, while he was led off to be plastered in hospital, the maddened rioters held their indignation meeting, and not only they, but high officials eager for their votes, united in denouncing the officer to the President of the United States, declaring the victim a model citizen, sober and peaceable, and the captain drunk, foul-mouthed, and abusive. The press of the neighborhood aided in spreading abroad the utterly false report of the affair, with the usual result of the temporary humiliation and distress of the officer and his friends, the inevitable official investigation, and the prompt verdict, "The officer deserves commendation, not condemnation." One paper, within five days of its original report, announced that it had discovered that it was the civilian who was drunk and who used the foul language attributed to the officer. It furthermore said that the officer had done just right; but this was the single and phenomenal instance. The other papers, like Elmendorf, probably reasoned that if the officer wasn't the blackguard they had striven to make him appear, he might as well have been.

These are specimens of experiences too well known to all concerned. "May the Lord preserve us from any more riot duty!" said Kenyon, piously, as they steamed away across the Illinois prairies; "but," he added, "I'll bet ten dollars to ten cents the politicians will get us into more and worse another year."

Yet even such scenes have their humorous side. It was Daniel O'Connell, I believe, who defeated the female champion of Billingsgate by calmly referring to her as the hypothenuse of a right-angled triangle, which was something utterly beyond her powers of repartee; it was he, at all events, who silenced another virago with the cutting response, "Sure every one knows, ma'am, ye're no better than a parallelogram, and you keep a whole parallelopipedon concealed in your closet at home;" and it was one of the trimmest, nattiest, most punctilious of our captains who stood in front of the silent ranks, listening in apparently absorbed attention to the furious tirade lavished on him by the spokeswoman of the mob, a street drab of uncommon stature and powers of expression and command of expletive. Winding up a three-minute speech with the remark, "I could pick ye up and ate ye, only the taste would turn me stomach, you white-livered, blue-bellied son of a scut," the lady had to pause for breath, and the soldier looked up from under his hat-brim and mildly remarked, "Madam, you're prejudiced," whereat even some of her sympathizers forgot their rancor and roared with laughter, and the idolatrous rank of his soldiery doubled up like so many blue pocket-rules, and the newspaper men chuckled with glee. By tacit consent, apparently, the Chicago papers were saying as little as possible against the regulars just then, and many a bright fellow who owned that he hadn't known anything about them before, except what he had read in his paper in the past, found many a friend among them and many a cause for writing of them in a new and different vein.

Cranston's old home was decorated in style the day the cavalry

marched away. Mrs. Mac had the old guidons and a big flag swung out on the porch, Mac in his most immaculate uniform standing at the salute. Many an eye in the long, dusty column danced at sight of the honest couple, and one young fellow, their graceless nephew, now a recruit in Captain Davies's troop, braced up in saddle and fixed his eyes fiercely on his file-leader, and for fear of the stern avuncular injunction to "Kape yer eyes to the front, there!" couldn't be induced to peep at Aunt Mollie as she swung a tattered guidon that had been carried by Mac in the ranks of "C" troop many a year before. Captain Davies himself rode out of column and held forth a cordial hand to the old sergeant, as the last troop went clinking by. "We'll make a soldier of the boy, sergeant, as you tried to make of me when I joined," said he; "and if he has half the stuff there was in his uncle it'll be no trouble at all."

And so they went on up the avenue, with hats and handkerchiefs waving adieu and cordial voices shouting approving words. Presently, riding at ease now, they filed along under the beautiful façade of the Lambert Memorial, and, glancing up, Cranston saw at the broad bow window the familiar features of Mr. Wells and caught his joyous "Hurrah!" By his side, smiling and nodding and kerchief-waving, was his buxom helpmeet, one arm thrown about a fragile, pale-faced girl in black. Off came Cranston's broad campaign hat; he bent low over the pommel of his saddle, ay, and looked back again with admiration in his eyes and a fervent "Thank God!" upon his lips. There were decorations in plenty, and enthusiastic demonstrations, too, from a wide portico, "crowded with prominent society people," as the papers said, when a few moments later the column swung by Allison's impressive home; but here the major merely raised his hat and neither bent nor bowed.

Riot duty over for the time being, Mr. Forrest was recalled from the command of his company to a desk at head-quarters and bidden to complete the maps and reports of his Oklahoma work. The maps he went at methodically enough, but the report he hesitated over. "No," said Wells, in response to his call and question, "Miss Wallen is not ready to resume work at the Lambert, and it is my belief she never will be." Then he looked keenly at the officer's face, and was gratified to see the deep shade of anxiety and distress with which it was instantly covered. "She'll be *well* enough; it isn't that," he continued; "but the girl is proud and sensitive, as any lady has a right to be, and she hasn't forgiven Allison. Oh, yes, he sent her a sort of apology,—five lines of somebody else's fault and ten pounds of fruit. She gave the fruit to Mart's hopeful family, and I think she gave Allison the devil. I didn't see her letter, but the old man dropped in here the other day to ask when she'd be back, and incidentally remarked that she seemed to be rapidly recovering, if fifty pounds of temper to the square inch was any indication. 'How the mischief was I to know,' said he, 'that hundreds of girls had to work in offices at night, had to find their way home late at night, and that much of their work was dictated to them during the day and had to be typed before early morning?' Even if he didn't know, by gad," said Wells, bringing his fist down with re-

sounding whack on his big desk, "it's time he did know that this country isn't France, and that these brave girls who are honorably earning their own bread, and often, as was the case with her, supporting whole families, are entitled to the respect, yes, by gad, the reverence, of every man with a grain of decency in him. This is America, by the Eternal!—the one country on the face of the globe where an honest girl may go wheresoever her work may call her."

"Amen to that!" said Forrest. "But do you mean that she will not return here?"

"Not unless she can be induced to withdraw her resignation. She comes to live under our roof to-morrow, you know. That good fellow Cranston has given Mart pay work. Her plan is to join forces with her old friend Miss Bonner and reopen her typewriter down town, and I find she has a will of her own."

This, too, was something Mr. Forrest became convinced of, even had he not suspected it before. Though still sorrowing deeply over her mother's death, Jenny was able to receive some callers by the time the troops were going, and very prettily she thanked her friend and customer, as she was pleased to call him, for the flowers sent so frequently during her illness. Despite the faint color with which she had welcomed him, Forrest could not but see how pale and fragile she looked, and the slender white hand that he had watched so often flying over the clicking keys seemed very limp and listless now. It only passively responded to the warmth of his clasp. In fact, it hardly could be said to respond at all. She was reclining in an easy-chair. A soft breeze, playing through the open window, rippled the shining little curls about her white temples, and Forrest drew his chair close to hers.

It was the first time they had been alone together since the night following his home-coming in the late spring, the night of the luckless dinner at Allison's, the night in which, leaving her to work alone at the Lambert over his rough notes, he had gone, as she believed, to spend the evening with his *fiancée*, the night when with almost frenzied fingers she worked to finish every word of his report that he might find it ready on his return, and that she might find, as she did, her way home without him. Then had come the sudden cloud of her mother's serious illness, of Mart's disappearance, the gloom of the strike, the crash of the riots, the blow of her mother's death, a grief the more pathetic because for several years mother and daughter seemed to have reversed their relative positions and the child had become the protector, guardian, and provider. Then the brutal wrong of Allison's accusation, told her with such well-simulated sympathy and reluctance, but with such exquisitely feminine stab in every sentence; the collapse, the struggle, the suffering, the half-reluctant convalescence—and the sudden sunshine of that afternoon when he turned from the carriage of the girl to whom he was declared engaged, let her drive away without another glance, and stood there, tall and stalwart and manly, his soft brown eyes fastened on her face,—hers, Jenny Wallen's, a penniless, motherless, homeless working-girl. Mrs. Wells had hugged herself with delight all the way back, and would have said no end of foolish things

but for her patient's prohibition. Even the prohibition had not kept her afterwards from telling Jenny how Forrest had refused his hand to Mr. Allison, refused once more to set foot within his doors, and what, what could that mean?

But the girl, despite her woman's heart, had a clear brain and cool judgment. Holding herself in honesty, independence, and integrity the peer of any man she ever heard of, brave, proud, and self-reliant, she had schooled herself to study the difference between his social surroundings and her own. Wells had spoken of Forrest's proud and powerful kindred in the East, of a mother and sister who held their heads far higher than ever could John Allison, who forty years before was but a train-boy peddling peanuts for a livelihood. Even in the wildly improbable event of her soldier knight's learning to love her, what madness it would be to expect his people to welcome her, what madness to think of being his without that welcome! Even if through love for him they opened their arms to her, what would they say to Mart and his brood? Jenny's sense of the humorous prevailed over her troubles at this juncture and made her laugh at the contemplation of that mental picture. Then she bristled again with honest pride. Mart was her own brother, anyway, her father's son. He had been a dear boy and she very fond of him in the old days; he had married beneath him, weakling as he was; she'd stand by Mart and work for his wife and babies; they would learn to love Aunt Jenny, and she would forget she ever had cried for the moon or learned to love a soldier. She didn't love him! She wouldn't! But here were boxes of exquisite cut flowers that had been coming in for a fortnight, and here was the sender, his chair close to hers, and he bending still closer. Then he began to speak, and his voice—how utterly different it sounded now from that in which she heard him say good-by to Florence Allison! She wasn't strong yet. How could she control the throbbing of her heart?

And then the room seemed to begin a slow, solemn waltz, even when she closed her eyes and firmly shut her hands, for his first words were, "I have a world of things to say, and only this one blessed evening in which to speak. I am ordered to my regiment at once."

Coming home later that night, Mr. Wells found the partner of his joys and sorrows a tearful, lonely wreck on the parlor sofa. Jenny had disappeared. For all explanation Mrs. Wells drew him by the coat-sleeve into the room, shut the door behind him, precipitated herself upon his shoulder, and sobbed, "She—she—she's refused him."

"Well, I suppose she thought he belonged to Miss Allison."

"No, no. It isn't that at all: it's pride. It's obstinacy. I don't know what to call it. He told her—he told *me* there had never been such a thing as an engagement between Miss Allison and himself, and that there probably never would or could have been. I could see he was cut to the heart, that he loves our brave Jenny deeply, truly, and there isn't any quixotism about it. But she—why, the girl's just marble! It was he who called me and stood there with such sadness and reproach in his eyes and told me what he'd told her and begged that I should plead with her when he was gone, but she only covered

her face, with the tears trickling down through her fingers, and when he had to go she stood up like a little queen and said she thanked him and honored him, and even assured him that there was no other man on earth she cared for, but no, *no*, NO, was her one answer to his plea that she would be his wife. She will not even let him write to her."

And Wells comforted his wife as best he could, but there was no comforting himself.

That was the 1st of August,—the hottest, dryest ever known along the lake, yet the dismal fog-horn tooted day after day and night after night when not so much as a single tear could have been wrung from the ambient air. It was all on account of the smoke-clouds that obscured the sun and shut out the horizon weeks at a time, for the whole Northwest was one blaze of forest fires, and Wells grew crabbed and ill tempered at his desk and snapped at his new typewriter until, between the smoke and the tears, her eyelids smarted. He delighted in bullying Allison whenever he saw him. The magnate had offered Miss Wallen a permanent position and a good salary in his own office, and marvelled at her refusal. She still occupied her pretty room at the Wellses', but solely on her own conditions,—that she should pay her board. She reopened her typewriter in the big business block down town, and seemed to gain health, color, and elasticity in her daily tramps to and fro. Business seemed to prosper, now that the urgent need was over, and Jenny could have afforded a better gown than that she chose to wear, but she didn't know how soon Mart might lose his job again, and, as he never saved for the wife and babies, she must needs save for them. Despite her prohibition, two letters came from Forrest. She read them, answered the first, gently and with womanly dignity in every line, but made no reply to the second. Frequently on her evening homeward walk she encountered Miss Allison riding or driving with some of the *jeunesse dorée* of society. Hubbard was immensely attentive again, with many prospects, said his friends, of landing a winner, and as for Florence, it is due to her to say that she hid her woe most womanfully, if ever woe existed. Indeed, her lady friends took much comfort in saying that she certainly had lost no flesh over her *affaire de cœur*,—in fact, quite the contrary. And twice did Jenny catch sight of Elmendorf, despite his promptitude in dodging around the corner. He had become a full-fledged journalist now, writing police reports for a daily and resounding leaders for a semi-occasional, but, like Cary, his former pupil, who was bent still on going to the Point, he had unlimited faith in the future.

So, too, have his fellow strike-leaders, and with some show of reason. Not that their principles have been endorsed, but that, just as in 1877, the active participants in the great riots have been allowed to go practically unpunished. The individual citizen who should heave a brick through the window of a crowded car, set fire to a sleeper, or slug a locomotive engineer at his post of duty would undoubtedly be sent to jail or the lunatic asylum, if detected; but when he conspires and combines with hundreds of others, thereby a thousandfold increasing the danger and damage, it becomes a delicate matter for

office-holders to handle, and so, while the leaders are free to roam the land and preach sedition and rebellion, the criminal and vagabond classes, the ignorant and vicious, and the great array of foreign-born, foreign-bred laborers, eagerly await the next opportunity. The real sufferers are the native-born or naturalized citizens, who, listening to the false promises of professional agitators, have been egged on to riot and outlawry and have lost through them their situations, their savings, and, in some cases, even their little homes. This and what one of our ablest generals aptly described as the "affected sympathy" of the men in office, high or low, for the men in the workshop,—the more affected the louder,—brought about and will bring about again these scenes of tumult, riot, and rage that, but for the restraining hand of the regular army, would result in anarchy.

"We've had to step in between two fires many a time before," said old Kenyon, "and we'll have to do it many a time again. Any of you fellows who like that sort of thing may welcome this change of station, but I don't." And, indeed, marching orders had come. The autumn shaking up was distributing regiments anew, and once more Kenyon's battalions were striding through the Chicago streets,—Forrest, after sixteen years of subaltern life, wearing at last the new shoulder-straps of the captaincy. Cranston and his squadron, still retained within supporting distance of the old homestead, eagerly welcomed their comrades of the riot days, and no sooner were they fairly settled down in the fine quarters at Sheridan than the new captain was out of uniform and into civilian dress and speeding townward,—"to see Wells," he said. Forrest lived with Cranston a few days while getting his own quarters in readiness, and was there to help the major welcome home his wife on her return from Europe late in October. Going to town "to see Wells" seemed to prove a bootless errand, for he came back with gloom in his dark brown eyes,—very pathetic gloom, Mrs. Cranston called it, and she, who had early gone to town to call on Mrs. Wells, began going rather more frequently than ever the major had contemplated, so interested was she in Mrs. Wells's boarder. "I want to know her well enough to be able to talk to her," she explained to her husband; but Cranston demurred. Possibly he knew from old experiences that one way not to influence a girl in favor of a friend was for Margaret to set to work to try. With the caution born of a quarter of a century of married bliss, however, he did not remind his better half of previous experiments. He meekly suggested that, as Forrest was likely to remain on duty all winter within besieging distance, it might be well to leave him and the lady to work out their own destiny.

"But it's so absurd, Wilbur!" said Margaret. "He is deeply, honestly, utterly in love with her, and she's worthy of every bit of it, if I'm any judge of a girl, and if she isn't careful she'll drive him away or anger him with her refusals to hear him. Why, she has refused even to see him, Mrs. Wells tells me, and—it's nothing but stubborn pride." Evidently, therefore, these two dames had been putting their heads together and were now in the combination to force Jenny to surrender.

Yet Jenny was right, knew she was right, and was to be moved neither by Forrest's pleadings nor by his friends' reproaches. There had been one long and painful interview between her and her lover soon after his return, and then very gently but very firmly she had told him that the matter must end then and there. She had asked him one question, and only one, in the course of that interview, and he could not answer her: "Mr. Forrest, what welcome would your mother, your sister, extend to me, a working-girl?"

Forrest said he really hadn't consulted them: he was seeking a wife for himself, not for the family. He said that once they knew her they would honor and love her as she deserved. But that wouldn't do. Miss Wallen had seen something of society leaders, and had formed her own opinion as to the law of caste. She had seen Robertson's charming play, too, and had her own views as to the matrimonial joys in store for its heroine. She had asked herself whether she would submit to being either tolerated or patronized by people who had wealth and position, to be sure, but not one whit more pride or principle, nor, for that matter, refinement, than she had. Down in the bottom of her brave heart was the craving of the woman to be loved for herself, to be appreciated for her true worth, but she believed that people in high position would not and could not accept one of her antecedents and connections, and she would have no concealment whatever. "Knowing me just as I am, just as I have been, knowing my brother and his people, you know well yours could not welcome me."

And Forrest knew even more. Divining one cause of Jeannette's refusal, he had told the whole story to his mother in the longest letter he had ever written,—and sorely he missed his typewriter in doing it, —and that letter proved a shock. The Forrests had built upon the story of his engagement to the beauty and heiress Miss Allison, and had long been awaiting his announcement to write the glowing letters of welcome, but here was a thunderbolt. Floyd had fallen in love with a working-girl, a shop-girl, a nobody, and actually wished his mother and sister to send gushing letters expressive of their approval and assurance of loving welcome. It was preposterous. They had expected a Florence and were told to be content with a Jenny. It was absurd in Floyd to point out that forty years ago Miss Allison's father was a peanut-peddler and Miss Wallen's a professor. Forty years in this country made vast changes. Floyd was simply pelting them with some of his ridiculous theories about the common people, their rights and wrongs. Lincoln, not Washington, was Floyd's ideal of the good and great and grand type of the American, and it had spoiled him. All this was what was said to one another in excited household chat. What was written was more diplomatic, but quite to the purpose. They could not endorse his choice, and he could not assure his proud, independent lady-love that they would. "He was awfully in love once before for years, and got over it," said Floyd's married sister, "and he'll get over this."

But there were those nearest to Captain Forrest about that time who arrived at a widely different conclusion. Jenny Wallen might

have yielded could she have seen him and listened. Perhaps that was why she would not. It was no longer "Starkey's friend" who waylaid her on her homeward walks in the gloaming,—it was Captain Floyd Forrest, when he could get to town, and she took long, roundabout ways of reaching home and outmanœuvred her soldier. With her whole heart crying out against her, pleading for him and home and love and protection, she stilled it like the sturdy little aristocrat she was, and would have none of him or his. "What can one do with a girl like that?" asked Mrs. Cranston of her grizzled major one bleak November evening on her return from town. "She has told Mrs. Wells that she is going to leave her roof and live with Miss Bonner away down on the south side, and it's all because Forrest is received at the Wellses' and she is determined not to see him." The major was hard-hearted enough to say he believed that interference even on Meg's part would only make matters worse.

But the captain heard of the proposed move, and then he placed in Mrs. Wells's hands a brief note. He was conquered now. Rather than see her leave the roof of such devoted friends, he pledged himself to vex her no more. Neither there nor on her homeward way would he seek to speak with her again. Jenny, yielding perhaps as much to the Wellses' pleading as to this, remained. What ever could be the outcome? was now the question.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Meantime the little blind god was working a combination of his own. One stinging wintry evening, when the wind was whistling from the northwest and a cold wave of most approved and vicious pattern had swooped down on Chicago, when the pavements were coated with ice and the populace with extra garments, and the visible features of pedestrians were unbecomingly red, a tall, soldierly-looking man, garbed in furs, was patrolling an up-town street and keeping anxious watch across the way. He had not promised not to look at her, at all events, and the thought of the fragile form he loved, shivering, possibly, in that bitter blast, had lured him from the Lambert to within sight of the Wellses' door-way. The yellow green of the wintry west was fading, the lamps were flickering in the gale, and the electric globes, swinging at the corner, threw black, shifting shadows across the pavement. The captain gazed wistfully up at a certain window across the way. She was not yet home, for all there was darkness. Then he peered along the sidewalk towards the avenue. A social function of some kind was going on, and a number of carriages were drawn up at the curb near a great stone house that faced the broader and more fashionable thoroughfare to the east, or else were moving slowly up and down, their coachmen thrashing vigorously with their arms to restore circulation in their numbed fingers. Forrest recognized the once familiar brougham of the Allisons', and conjectured that Florence, with her now desperately devoted Hubbard, was among the guests. At the eastward end of the street all was light

and bustle, clattering hoofs and slamming carriage-doors. All to the west was gloom and silence; yet out of that darkness was he looking for the light, the one light, that could bring even momentary gladness to his eyes. He knew that on certain evenings it was her habit to stop and see how Mart's little brood was faring, and their new home was on a back street not four blocks distant. She was later than usual this evening: wondering why, he tramped westward towards the corner. He heard the swift hoofs of horses coming behind him, and the smooth roll of carriage-wheels. He saw sudden commotion and excitement among some children issuing from a baker's shop at the corner, and heard their shrill, eager voices, then the clang of gongs, the louder thunder of galloping hoofs, and the ponderous bounding bulk of a fire-engine as it came tearing down the cross street. Like a rushing volcano it dashed southward, leaving a trail of sparks and smoke, and then there was sudden warning cry. Some of the children, unmindful of anything except the engine, had sprung upon the crossing to see it go by, just as the carriage came spinning out from behind them. The coachman shouted, hauled at his reins, and did his best, but the little ones heard only the thunder in front, and in an instant, though almost sliding on their powerful haunches, John Allison's beautiful bays dashed through the frightened group, yet not before the alert soldier, with one spring, landed in their midst, brushing them aside, and then, with one shrieking little maid in his arms, went down on the icy pavement in the midst of a tangle of lashing hoofs and struggling, affrighted horses. How he got out he could not say. A giant policeman was tugging at his shoulder; ready-handed men were at the horses' heads, and, breathless, he stood erect, conscious of something wrong in one side, but mainly anxious about the child. She was picked up, stunned and senseless, and in the white glare of the electric lamp he recognized the features of Mart Wallen's four-year-old Kitty. A sympathetic crowd had gathered. A young man poked a silk-hatted head from the carriage-window, and, with a face nearly the color of the Queen chrysanthemum in the lapel of his coat, besought Parks to hang on to his horses. A surly voice in the crowd said, "Damn your horses, and you too! If it hadn't been for this gentleman you'd have killed a dozen of these kids." Forrest's head was beginning to swim, but he took the limp little burden on his left shoulder. "Let me have her," he said. "I know where to take her. Bring a doctor to Mr. Wells's at once, please." And as he turned away he caught one glimpse of a fair, anxious face peering out across Mr. Hubbard's elegantly draped shoulder, and found that he could not raise his hand to his fur cap. "All right, Miss Allison," he smiled to her reassuringly. "Drive on." And then some one helped him in to Wells's parlor, and Mrs. Wells came fluttering down, all sympathy and welcome. Her deft, womanly hands stripped off the cheap hood and coat of the little sufferer; other friendly, sympathetic souls came in to help; and then, feeling oddly faint and queer, Forrest quietly stole away. Closing the glazed hall door behind him, he paused a moment in the vestibule, finding himself face to face with a slender form at sight of which even then his heart gave one great

bound. Instinctively one arm was outstretched in longing, in greeting, and then at sight of him the form recoiled, and, cold as the biting wind that swept his cheek, he heard the brief sentence, "You have broken your word."

Bowing his head, conscious of rapidly increasing dizziness, raging at the thought of breaking down before her, yet smarting under the lash of her undeserved rebuke, he pushed blindly by and went forth into the night. The street was rocking like the steamer of the summer twice gone by as it pitched through the "roaring forties." He remembered trying to make his way back towards that corner—where the horses went down—there were friends there—and that big policeman—he'd help. The lamp-post leaned over and tapped him hard on top of the head. He tried to grapple it, but the right arm would not answer. Then his feet shot out from under him on the icy pavement, and the curb flew up and struck him a violent blow at the base of the skull.

Ten minutes later, as Jeannette Wallen was rejoicing over the returning consciousness of a sorely bumped but otherwise unharmed little maid, and hugging that precious niece to her heart, while the doctor administered a soothing draught, and Mrs. Wells was pulling off the pygmy shoes and stockings, the servant admitted an abashed citizen who faltered at the parlor door and mumbled, "Say, doctor, that gen'l'm'n that saved that little girl must 'a' got badly hurt. He's lyin' out here down the street—senseless——"

That was all Jeannette heard. Who caught little Kate was a question the distracted aunt never asked until many a long day after. Nobody caught *her* until, a dozen doors away, under the gas-light, in the midst of a little knot of neighbors, a battered, bleeding head was lifted from a rough coat-sleeve, and, folded in the slender, clasping arms of a kneeling girl, was pillowed on the pure heart where the baby curls were nestling but a moment before.

Fractured ribs and collar-bones yield not unreadily to treatment; even fractured skulls have been known to mend; and in a week, though dazed and bewildered, Captain Forrest was convalescing. Cranston and other fellows from the fort were in frequent attendance. The army surgeon from head-quarters had been unflagging, and Colonel Kenyon himself was at the railway station when the "Limited" arrived from New York, bringing a much-alarmed mother and sister, who relieved, if they did not entirely replace, certain other nurses at the patient's bedside. Upon their arrival, after three days and nights of vigil, Miss Wallen disappeared. She betook herself to Miss Bonner's refuge far down town, and just what Mrs. Forrest could have heard from the Cranstons, from her son's commanding officer, and from the fluent lips of Mrs. Wells, the reader may best conjecture, for it is a recorded fact that no sooner was her son out of all danger and well on the road to recovery than two ladies drove to the south side to seek this modest abode of working-girls and to call in person on Jeannette.

That afternoon came Cary Allison to visit his old friend the captain. Day after day had the boy been there to inquire, and it was good to see his rejoicing in the mending of the stalwart patient and refreshing to hear his comments on affairs domestic. Flo and her spoons just

made him sick, he said, and the idea of having a Stoughton bottle like that for a brother-in-law was disgusting. "Why couldn't *he* have jumped out and lent a helping hand, instead of sneaking inside the coach and crying at Parks? Hubbard's a muff! I tell Flo he belongs to the family the squash was named for, and I call him Squash, too, and so does pa, though he's glad enough to rope him in to buying more stocks, I notice." It was plain that in Cary's eyes sister Titania had found her Bottom and was enamoured of an ass. Brother-like, he had made her wince many and many a time, and now it was Forrest's turn.

"Say, cap, I do wish you'd come around and cheer the governor up a bit. He's been warped all out of shape since the strike, and seems to feel all broke up over home matters, too. He won't stay there at all. The last thing he did was to drive around to Wallen's and offer him a first-class clerkship, and now he's rowing with Wells because he won't let on what's become of your typewriter."

His typewriter? The girl he loved with all the strength of his being, honored and revered and longed to make his wife,—and the world could speak of her in that loose, pragmatical, possessive, chattel-like way. His typewriter! No more his than any man's who gave her employment. No longer his, in fact, since he was virtually forbidden her presence. He who had offered her his hand and name and love was actually of less account in the arrangement of her daily life than any one of the thousands who trod the pavement under her office windows, for they could offer work. Forrest threw himself back upon his pillow, buried his face in his arms, groaned aloud as the innocent youth went gayly forth into the wintry sunshine, and the doctor and the household of anxious women wondered what had happened to set back their impatient patient. Could it be, suggested that social prophet, his sister, that he was, after all, really interested in Florence Allison and chagrined at the news of her engagement, now formally announced? Might it not be, after all, that, as she had originally suggested, his apparent infatuation for Jeannette Wallen was mere sentiment, quixotism, proximity, and that he would speedily recover could they only get him away awhile? Surely it was worth the trial. His mother's health was suffering in the rigors of a Chicago winter. They had spent three months in St. Augustine each winter for years past, and but for Floyd should be there now.

It was arranged somehow. He was passive, submissive, indifferent. He knew nothing of the one wild moment of Jenny's break-down. He had never been allowed one hint of where his blessed head had been pillowed that bitter November night. The girl had pledged her friend to absolute secrecy. Removed on his convalescence from Wells's roof to his mother's rooms at The Virginia, Forrest saw no more of his hostess for several days. Then, with a three months' leave on surgeon's certificate, he was driven, under his mother's wing, to bid her adieu, and that night they were off for Florida.

"I'll never forgive him as long as I live," said Mrs. Wells. "He never gave me a chance to tell what—I can't tell you, Mrs. Cranston, but you *know;* and those two proud women have just got him between them now, and they'll never let him out of their leading-strings again."

"You don't know him," said Mrs. Cranston. "He'll break the strings and be back, or he isn't worth another thought of a girl like her."

But Jenny was not so certain. Never yet had she had opportunity to unsay the cutting words with which she had met him that bitter night. Time and again in her heart of hearts had she planned how those unsaying words should be said, and said just as soon as ever he came, but he came rather soon and suddenly.

They were great Christmas farers at Wellses'. With no children of their own, the sweet holiday season would have lost its sweetest charm but that Jenny was again with them. They rigged up a lovely Christmas-tree for Mart's babies, and summoned in sundry little waifs from the neighborhood, and had games and romps and laughter and merry voices. Later in the week there was a dinner at which the Cranstons and some fort friends appeared; there was a mistletoe bough that night, and not a little coquetry and merriment, for Wells had invited the library girls and numerous young men to be present, and the customs of Old England were reproduced with characteristic American exaggeration. That mistletoe bough remained suspended from its chandelier, a reminder of the joys of the old year, even after '95 came knocking at the door, and in some odd way a little sprig thereof was found one evening to be clinging to the top of a cabinet photograph of Mr. Forrest which stood on the mantel shelf.

It was a sharp, cold January evening, and Jenny Wallen's soft cheek was glowing, and her eyes sparkling, as she tripped lightly up the stone steps, let herself into the warm hall-way, and peered into the parlor. No one was there. A bright coal fire blazed in the open grate. The pretty room looked cosy and inviting. The library beyond —"Wells's particular"—was dark. Mrs. Wells, said the maid, from the head of the kitchen stairs, had been home, but was gone over to the Lambert to meet Mr. Wells. So Jenny was alone. Some women lose courage at such times. She seemed to gain it. Drawing off her gloves and throwing aside the heavy cloak, she stood there in front of the blaze, her eyes fixed upon that unconscious portrait, her hands extended over the flames. What speaking eyes the girl had! What could be the words the soft, rosy lips were framing? With all her soul she was gazing straight into that unresponsive, soldierly, handsome face. With all her heart she was murmuring some inarticulate appeal, lavishing some womanly caresses upon the dumb and senseless picture. Then the little hands were upraised, and the next instant, frame and all, the shadow was nestled just where the substance had lain, clasped in those encircling arms, long weeks before. A moment or two it was held there, the sweet face bending over, the soft lips murmuring, crooning to it as a mother might to a precious child, and then it was raised still more, until those lips were pressed upon it long, long, long and fervently.

Then down went everything with a crash.

In striving to explain matters and set himself right in the eyes of his lady-love some hours later, Captain Forrest protested that he had had no intention whatever of spying upon, much less of startling

her. They had speedily discovered at St. Augustine that it was useless trying to bring back this wayward son and brother, a man of thirty-five, to live without the heart so unmistakably in the keeping of the girl he'd left behind. "I have written to her—all you could ask, Floyd, my son," were at last the mother's words. "Go, and God bless you." And three days later he surprised Mrs. Wells. "I've just got to go out," said she, after a while, "and you've simply got to stay here. I'll leave directions that I'm out to everybody, and——" Then did that designing matron pick up his furs and deposit them—and him—in the library. "You're to stay here, mind, till I get back."

"But you didn't," interposed his hearer, reproachfully, at this juncture. "You burst in there like a—like a tiger, and scared me out of my seven senses."

"That was entirely your fault. I was merely trying to escape from the house. You see when I left Florida you were living, as I supposed, at Miss Bonner's, and as soon as you came in it was my cue to leave, in view of the ferocity of your remarks the last time we met here."

"Knowing how I must regret that, you need not have been so precipitate. It was what I think you gentlemen call a 'stand-off,'" said she, with a pretty grimace at the slang, "but—do you always take the roundabout way to reach the door?" Miss Wallen's lips were twitching with suppressed delight, and Captain Forrest was watching them with ill-suppressed emotion. He rallied promptly, however.

"Rarely, but in this case I flew—to pick up the picture you had dropped."

"Oh, the maid would have done that. She was promptly on hand."

"Yes, too promptly. So promptly as to inspire the belief that she suspected something was on foot when you—when I—— By the way, what became of that sprig of potato-vine, or chickweed, or something, that was on top of the frame? Mrs. Wells missed it as soon as she came in."

"It fell into the grate, I presume; but it wasn't chickweed. There's more of it if Mrs. Wells needs it," she added, nodding to the pendent spray beneath the chandelier. "It doesn't signify."

"Oh, I thought it did—at least I hoped so. Mistletoe generally does."

"Not when mistaken for potato-vine," she answered, yet her eyes were smiling at him.

"Jeannette," he said, impulsively, his deep voice trembling, as he stood close before her and strove to seize the little hand that was toying at her white, round throat, "mother's letter must surely be with you by morning. It is very hard to keep my faith and plead no more until she has pleaded for me. Must I wait? Will Miss Bonner bring it to you at once?"

"I—hardly think so."

"Then may I not go to-night, if need be, and get it? It was addressed, you know, to her care."

"Yes, so I observed."

"Jenny! Then you have it? You have read what she says? Oh, my darling! Then——"

And what imploring love was in those soft, brown eyes of his! What tenderness and longing and passion in the outstretched arms! She looked shyly up at him, trembling in spite of herself, but not yet yielding.

"You know I've had no time to more than glance at it," she said. "I had hoped to read it this evening, but, you see, visitors came in. I must read it all carefully to-morrow."

"Ah," he said, "you have me at your mercy. You wrung those promises from me, and now——" She backed away from him a bit, he looked so fiercely reproachful, but he followed. She upheld her hands in warning, and he strove to seize them, but they evaded him.

"You are proud, stern, unyielding," he said at last, and turned half helplessly away, then caught sight of the feathery spray now almost over her bonny, curly head. "If it were *only* Christmas time again! I'd claim the privilege of the mistletoe."

The room was very still a moment. She stood there with bounding, throbbing heart, her swimming eyes fixed on his strong, soldierly face, so powerful in its pleading, so helpless through his pledge. She saw that he would not break his promise, yet that her lightest word, her faintest signal, would unchain him. She saw even in the sterner lines about his forehead something of the look of utter weariness and defeat that hovered there the night they bore the senseless burden within those very doors, and in one great wave of tenderness, of answering love and joy and longing, the woman in her triumphed at last.

Only like a whisper, so soft, so tremulous was her voice, the needed words were spoken:

"Is it potent—only at Christmas?"

But he heard, and sprang to her and caught her in his arms. Little heroine though she was, what a tame surrender after all!

THE END.

A GLIMPSE OF CUBA.

A SUN-KISSED island of the sea, whose breath is laden with the poison of the pestilence. The Gem of the Antilles, whose riches have become a proverb—and where want and misery parade in filth and rags. A land of princely estates, whose owners tremble for their safety from day to day, and whose revenues are absorbed by the grinding power of a government in which they have no part. A land in which it is so easy to subsist that effort seems useless, and where, in consequence, laziness and poverty abound. A land of soft content, of calm and quiet, where revolution sleeps but is never dead, and where the constant evidence of military despotism is required to keep the lurking embers from becoming open flame.

Such, in brief, is Cuba, almost our nearest neighbor, an island which it has long been our habit to covet. We have narrowly escaped its possession more than once, and this escape has doubtless been its loss and our own gain.

The city of Havana is not only the gate to Cuba, but is its centre, its soul, as well. Here is the seat of its politics, its government, its commerce. And here, too, separated from us by a narrow channel which a few hours can span, is the metropolis of Spanish America, and the most thoroughly fortified city of the Western hemisphere.

The entrance to the harbor of Havana is brilliant, and with an eye to stage effects matters are so ordered that the stranger comes within it always by the light of day. When I entered it, just at daybreak, and having lain half the night outside and beneath the guns of grim Morro Castle, the scene that presented itself was one of extraordinary beauty. Great Morro itself, fortress of impregnable rock, lifted itself from the bluff to the east, the waves of the sea washing its feet. A little farther back was Cabaña, only less grim, less solid, less threatening than Morro, while upon the other side La Punta ("the point") reached out its guns toward Morro, the three constituting a series of defences that have provoked the admiration of the greatest modern engineers. Running in between these, we were in the bay, a harbor of good size and most perfectly sheltered, crowded with craft of many sorts, the ships of a dozen nations making it gay with their flags. Beyond the bay, and sloping from the higher levels inland down to the very edge of the water, was the city, and beyond that the distant hills, and again beyond, the great fort of Principe crowning it all, a grim sentinel posted there to scent far off the approach of danger.

As soon as the sunrise gun had been fired we were in the midst of it, anchored in the middle of the bay,—for no foreign vessel ever goes to the pier there,—and instantly surrounded by a swarm of boats whose swarthy rowers clamored vigorously for possession of our persons and our luggage. These boats, which are a cross between a prairie

schooner and a Venetian gondola, are the first bit of local color to attract us. They carry broad-bowed awnings over the stern, to protect passengers from the sun, and when we have learned this reason for their curious appearance we are impressively reminded that we are in a tropic land.

There are other reminders, as soon as we are in the streets of Havana. Dark faces abound. There is little hurry. Men predominate to such an extent that the sight of a woman, unless one of the lower classes going to or from her work, or a black-eyed vender of lottery-tickets, is almost a novelty. There is much noise, made by the sellers of all sorts of wares, who cry them up and down the streets. There is an abundance of color, in the dress of the people, in the accoutrements of the horses and mules that draw the varied traffic, in the tints of the buildings, in the uniforms of the soldiers who are everywhere, in the hues of the morning sky above it all.

The military are *en évidence* at every turn. At the wharf so many soldiers are pacing to and fro, or lounging listlessly about, that it gives one the impression of having landed at a military post, rather than a commercial seaport of some two hundred and fifty thousand people. It requires some time to get away from this impression. Almost every fifth man that one meets wears a military dress of some sort: barracks and fortresses are strewn about the city and its outskirts *ad libitum*, and bands of marching men and the sounds of martial music are encountered from morning to night.

Our way to the hotel is made through narrow streets, perhaps fifteen feet from wall to wall, with a narrow ledge of stone on either side to serve as a footpath. These walks are worn into hollows by the ceaseless tread of two long centuries, and it is a matter of labor to keep one's footing. The streets are so narrow that two vehicles can hardly pass, and indeed some of them will not permit this, so that driving upon them is allowed in one direction only. This is in the older part of the city, and will apply to the streets given up to commercial uses. The Prado is an exception to this, being a fine wide street through the heart of the city, widening still further here and there into handsome plazas, and bordered by substantial buildings. In one of these plazas, called Central Park, is a fine statue of Isabella. Here, upon two or three evenings of the week, a band plays, and Havanese society comes out on dress parade. On Sunday nights the scene is particularly animated: from the hour of eight until ten, carriages draw up and line the square, and belles and beaux join in a continuous parade about the statue. This is almost the only time and place when the women of Havana are to be seen upon the street. Late in the afternoon one may catch glimpses of them flitting in and out of the shops along the Calle de Obispo, or sometimes going to early mass at the cathedral, or, more than either of these, at the Tacon or the Albisu theatre, upon some gala night.

But the active and visible life of the city, at least so far as a stranger may see it, is an existence in which the gentler sex have little part. It is a life of hotels and cafés, and here the men gather after the affairs of the day, and dine and smoke and drink much light wine,

and gossip or discuss trade. Politics are not much talked in public, for spies are about, and the subject is too near their hearts to be lightly touched upon. Your true Cuban is a revolutionist, waiting only for the appointed time to throw off the mask of subserviency to the intolerable rule of Spain.

While Havana is the throbbing heart of Cuba, it is rural Cuba that supplies the arteries. It is from her plantations that the riches come which enable the people to pay the burdensome taxes that support the military—to keep themselves in subjection, to furnish the sinews of war that will be, more likely than not, directed against themselves.

The products of rural Cuba by which the island is chiefly known to the world are sugar and tobacco. Perhaps I should reverse this order of mention, for sugar is grown elsewhere, but tobacco—that is, tobacco such as is required for the production of a genuine Havana cigar—grows in but one place, the Vuelta Abajo district. Still, it is the sugar more than the tobacco that makes the wealth of Cuba, as you will easily see when you have left the coast and the cities and begun your journey into the interior. The great and striking feature of the landscape you find to be the sugar plantations,—thousands of acres of cane under splendid cultivation, hundreds of half-naked laborers working in the fields, tall chimneys marking the location of the sugar-houses, and wide, low-roofed, airy homesteads, wherein life might be idyllic if it were not for the undercurrent of political intrigue and unrest.

Between the condition of the planter and that of all other agriculturists whatever in Cuba the widest difference exists. The laborer has nothing, never has had anything, and is happy in the knowledge that he never will have anything. The small farmer, the owner of a few acres, is the most abjectly poverty-stricken son of the soil that I have ever met. He lives in the poorest habitation known to civilized man, a hut made of the bark of the palm-tree. Beside it the adobe dwelling of the Mexican is a palace. It has one room, a dirt floor, neither window nor chimney: in this the family live like cattle, subsisting upon the poorest of food, as most that the soil produces must go to pay the taxes. Children run about, guiltless of the knowledge of clothes until six or eight years old. Books, education, the world, are things of which they have never even dreamed.

It is true that there is an intermediate group. Between these people and the planters is a small contingent of thrifty farmers. Here and there through the country may be seen a stone dwelling with red tile roof that marks the home of one who by some rare enterprise has become possessed of enough land to engage in cattle-raising or fruit-growing. But the prosperous, forehanded, middle-class farmer is conspicuous by his absence. It is because there is no such middle class, and because the country-people are either the owners of great estates or else abjectly poor, that it is a mistake to speak of Cuba as a rich country. It cannot be so while the present conditions exist. But with such a combination of soil and climate as she possesses, the island is capable of great things. Money and enterprise are needed for the

development of its resources, and these are not likely to be forthcoming while the present social and political conditions remain. If the island were open to American enterprise as freely as our own territory is, a decade would suffice for the working of great changes.

The sugar-production of Cuba, enormous as it now is, can be increased tenfold. And by the aid of modern improvements in the method of manufacture sugar can be produced so cheaply there that no other country in the world can fairly compete with it. Only a tithe of the lands adapted to sugar is now under cultivation. Coffee-growing, which was once in the front rank of its industries, has now fallen to a matter of small importance. With capital, and confidence in the honesty and good will of the government, this industry could again be put upon a profitable footing. So near as it is to us, and with the rapid improvement in means of transportation, it is the natural winter garden for the United States. There is no question about the "frost-line," that bugbear to the fruit- and vegetable-growers in our own South, and with cheap lands and cheap labor, and the encouragement that steamboat-lines are now giving, we could be supplied unfailingly with tropical products from this source. Bananas, cocoanuts, oranges, lemons, pineapples, would all pay well for careful and systematic cultivation.

I have said that the conditions of life are easy. That is true; and yet the subsistence of many of the people is wretched in the extreme. But for this there is not much excuse, from our point of view. A patch of bananas or plantains, that may be grown almost without labor, will furnish the food that is absolutely required, and they are better content with that than to have more and better food if the having of it means greater effort.

The cultivation of the soil, except upon the great improved estates, is by antique methods and with instruments that an American would hardly know how to use. Their ploughs are often only forked sticks shod with an iron point. Even their improved ploughs are cumbersome, single-handed affairs that are made especially for that trade by an enterprising firm in the United States.

A country village in the interior of Cuba affords the most *genre* picture of anything upon the island. It is only a collection of the palm-bark huts huddled closely together amid a grove of plantains. The air beneath this dense shade is always humid. The streets are always sticky, from the intermingling of drippings of molasses and sugar with the native soil for many years. Perfect quiet reigns, except when some lumbering *carreta*, with its ungreased wooden axles, toils slowly through, making the most discordant sounds. The women in loose robes, the men clad only in duck trousers and wide-brimmed hats, lounge about, seemingly having no serious duties to perform.

Another striking rural feature consists of the groves and avenues of palm—the *palma real*, or royal palm—that are met with on every hand. Long avenues of these stately trees often line the most wretched roadways, or wind up to sugar- or plantation-houses, making an approach that in magnificence can hardly be surpassed.

And now to return to the cities and the commerce of the island.

In Havana, in Matanzas, in Cienfuegos, the aspect of the business houses is forbidding, and there is not much external evidence of great trade. Yet, notwithstanding their uninviting exterior, much is done in the way of heavy transactions which would be no discredit to New York or Boston. Else there had not grown up such cities as we see here with so sparse a population back of them. The commerce is almost wholly with the United States. We are practically the only buyers of Cuba's productions, and if they were cut off from this market for a single season there would follow such distress, bankruptcy, and impoverished estates as can hardly be conceived. Yet the Americans who are engaged in trade there can almost be counted upon the fingers of one hand. Spaniards, Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, you will find, but rarely an American. Within the past five years some Americans have bought up one or two of the large bankrupt sugar estates, and have established a few banana and pineapple plantations and engaged in some mining ventures. On account of its possibilities, and the backward state of internal development, it offers an inviting field. And if those who are now there find no obstacles thrown in their way, it will doubtless pave the road for others.

It is because we furnish so largely the market for Cuban products that ardent annexationists say we should own the island. So long as we must have its sugar and tobacco and fruits, they say, we should have the land from which they come. But this is said without a sufficient knowledge of the vast difference between this people and our own. I cannot but think that a commercial union which would permit a free interchange of products would be infinitely better for us than a political union, admitting it to be desirable to have such competition with our own sugar-growers, who are now evincing so earnest an intention to show that we can produce our own supply at home.

And before such a union comes, whether political or commercial, it is to be hoped that intercourse with the United States will have improved Cuban morals, Cuban ideas of commercial rectitude, the sanitary condition of Cuban cities, and the Cuban idea of progress and development and civilization in general. As it stands to-day, Cuba is a land that seems hardly to have been brushed by the garments of our nineteenth-century civilization. But it has at last been invaded by the American tourist, and all these other things will follow in due course. Yet how much longer will be required to open its eyes to the fact that our ways are better than Cuban ways, is something that in my native American modesty I may not venture to prophesy.

A single instance to show how far behind us Cuba is, and I am done. The currency of a country is the best sign of its rank among nations. Tradition says there was a time when the currency of the United States was not a thing to boast of before the world. This may be true, but luckily I am a young man and may be permitted to doubt. But of the currency of Cuba there can be no doubt, for to-day it smells to heaven. Of all the wretched, ragged, tattered, and debased currency the world has ever known, I think none has been worse than this with

which my pockets have been contaminated here. The money-changer is everywhere, in the stores, the streets, the markets, and is always ready to exchange his various commodities for American money. I say "commodities" advisedly, for here many things pass as money. First in value, and in the hearts of the people, stand United States coin and bills, and it cannot but send a thrill of pride through the soul of a genuine American to see that here one is as good as the other, while their own bills are depreciated to one-half their face value. After this come, in rapidly declining ratio, Spanish gold, Spanish silver, Mexican silver, and then, a long way behind, the *billetas*, the native paper currency.

My first transaction with the brokers was rather confusing. In exchange for fifty dollars of good crisp greenbacks I received a miscellaneous assortment of gold, silver, and paper. The rate of exchange, it may be mentioned, was eight per cent. in my favor. I found myself in possession of certain "five-dollar" gold pieces, each of which was worth five dollars and thirty cents in Spanish silver; some huge and homely silver coins, each of which would buy twice its value in *billetas;* some Mexican coins, which had suffered a depreciation of twenty per cent. below the Spanish standard; and lastly the *billetas*, good for half their face. Later on I found still another sort of currency, the punched and mutilated American coins that were driven out of circulation here years ago; they have apparently found their way to Cuba *en masse*, and circulate there with no suspicion attaching that they are not up to par. This illustrates the simplicity of Cuban currency, and of Cuban financial matters in general. Any person can understand them—if he will study very patiently for a long time.

James Knapp Reeve.

THE LUCK OF THE ATKINSES.

NOBODY ever was poorer than the Atkinses, or, in common parlance, any more "shif'less." The family consisted of the old man, Bill by name, a half-blind, decrepit creature, who yet possessed a share of quaint humor; his wife, Lou-i-sy, a lazy, ragged old woman, who had grown fat on nothing, and who managed to keep her snuff-box full even when the coffee-pot was empty; and five or six lank, sallow boys and girls in various stages of age and dirtiness. They occupied a small log house on the outskirts of a town in the mountains of Arkansas, and their dwelling was remarkable only for its simplicity. It consisted of a single room, which the entire family occupied without regard to age or sex; the fireplace furnished at once heat, light, and the means of cooking their scanty food. Three wretched beds, a broken chair or two, a box which served as a table, a frying-pan, spider, and coffee-pot, with a few broken dishes, composed the entire wealth of the Atkins family, for their house was the property of a well-to-do citizen who let them live there for very pity. It was quite prosperous, this

inland Arkansas town, though fifty rough and rocky miles from the nearest railroad; it was considered by the country-folk around a dashing, stylish place. The ladies there never went barefooted, even in the hottest weather, and sun-bonnets were long since out of date. The men, too, wore store clothes, and some of them wore their coats to meeting during the summer; but this innovation was by no means popular. It was a gossipy little community, as an isolated place must be, and its church and political factions managed to keep things from stagnating. But the whole town was united upon one thing,—in heartily condemning the Atkinses. Even the Methodists and the Campbellites agreed on that, and they did not often agree upon anything, for the Campbellites had affirmed that they could sing louder and faster than the Methodists, and the boast had caused considerable ill feeling.

The town had to support the Atkinses, so surely it had the right to disapprove of them; but the disapproval was rather out of proportion to the aid they furnished, and had the position been reversed the Atkinses would have had more to eat. One lady in the town had declared that she would never help "them Atkinses" again. She related to a circle of sympathizing friends that she had offered Mis' Atkins two bits a week an' all she could eat, if she would do her washing and cooking, but the offer had been refused. Mrs. Atkins said she had to stay at home and take care of her "man," as he was "mighty nigh blind," and the old man had jocosely remarked that he "'lowed Lou-i-sy'd been doin' nothin' so long she'd hate to quit."

Mr. Johnson was proprietor of the only grocery-store in the town. He had come from New England years before, and had opened this store when lemons and oranges were practically unknown and white sugar well-nigh as hard to obtain. By dint of keeping these and similar luxuries and selling them at astonishingly high rates, and by introducing into the Western market many high-priced novelties, such as sardines, canned fruits, oatmeal, A B C crackers, and other articles calculated to please the eye and palate of the village customer, he had managed to amass quite a tidy little sum. On this gentleman the burden of contributing to the support of the Atkinses fell with especial severity. Not that he gave more than any one else,—quite the contrary,—but that his well-known stinginess made him feel it more. It is doubtful if he would have given anything at all, but from his desire to stand well in the eyes of the community, and especially of the gentleman on whose land the Atkinses lived. He was the rich man of the town, and his influence and importance were wonderful in a small way.

One evening a group of men had gathered in Mr. Johnson's store, as was the custom, solemnly gossiping about the events of the day. The proprietor stood behind the counter, keeping an anxious eye on his boxes of crackers and fruit that stood invitingly open. He was a slender man, slightly stooped, with his face and upper lip shaven and an iron-gray beard adorning his chin. He had small eyes and a bland smile that was intended to be very pleasing. It was hard to keep the smile this evening, though, for a lank mountaineer was making fearful depredations upon a box of "animal crackers" that stood open on the

A TROOPER GALAHAD.

BY

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING, U.S.A.,

AUTHOR OF "THE COLONEL'S DAUGHTER," "THE DESERTER," "FROM THE RANKS," "A SOLDIER'S SECRET," "SERGEANT CRŒSUS," "CAPTAIN CLOSE," "RAY'S RECRUIT," ETC.

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A TROOPER GALAHAD.

CHAPTER I.

"LIFE is full of ups and downs," mused the colonel, as he laid on the littered desk before him an official communication just received from Department Head-Quarters, "especially army life,—and more especially army life in Texas."

"Now, what are you philosophizing about?" asked his second in command, a burly major, glancing over the top of the latest home paper, three weeks old that day.

"D'ye remember Pigott, that little cad that was court-martialled at San Antonio in '68 for quintuplicating his pay accounts? He married the widow of old Alamo Hendrix that winter. He's worth half a million to-day, is running for Congress, and will probably be on the military committee next year, while here's Lawrence, who was judge advocate of the court that tried him, gone all to smash." And the veteran officer commanding the —th Infantry and the big post at Fort Worth glanced warily along into the adjoining office, where a clerk was assorting the papers on the adjutant's desk.

"It's the saddest case I ever heard of," said Major Brooks, tossing aside the *Toledo Blade* and tripping up over his own, which he had thoughtfully propped between his legs as he took his seat and thoughtlessly ignored as he left it. "Damn that sabre,—and the service generally!" he growled, as he recovered his balance and tramped to the window. "I'd almost be willing to quit it as Pigott did if I could see my way to a moderate competence anywhere out of it. Lawrence was as good a soldier as we had in the 12th, and, yet, what can you do or say? The mischief's done." And, beating the devil's tattoo on the window, the major stood gloomily gazing out over the parade.

"It isn't Lawrence himself I'm so—— Orderly, shut that door!" cried the chief, whirling around in his chair, "and tell those clerks I

want it kept shut until the adjutant comes; and you stay out on the porch.—It isn't Lawrence I'm so sorely troubled about, Brooks. He has ability, and could pick up and do well eventually, but he's utterly discouraged and swamped. What's to become, though, of that poor child Ada and his little boy?"

"God knows," said Brooks, sadly. "I've got five of my own to look after, and you've got four. No use talking of adopting them, even if Lawrence would listen; and he never would listen to anything or anybody—they tell me," he added, after a minute's reflection. "I don't know it myself. It's what Buxton and Canker and some of those fellows told me on the Republican last summer. I hadn't seen him since Gettysburg until we met here."

"Buxton and Canker be—exterminated!" said the colonel, hotly. "I never met Buxton, and never want to. As for Canker, by gad, there's another absurdity. They put him in the cavalry because consolidation left no room for him with us. What do you suppose they'll do with him in the —th?"

"The Lord knows, as I said before. He never rode anything but a hobby in his life. I don't wonder Lawrence couldn't tolerate preaching from him. But what I don't understand is, who made the allegation. What's his offence? Every one knows that he's in debt and trouble, and that he's had hard lines and nothing else ever since the war, but the court acquitted him of all blame in that money business——"

"And now to make room for fellows with friends at court," burst in the colonel, wrathfully, "he and other poor devils with nothing but a fighting record and a family to provide for are turned loose on a year's pay, which they're to have after things straighten out as to their accounts with the government. Now just look at Lawrence! Ordnance and quartermaster's stores hopelessly boggled——"

"Hush!" interrupted Brooks, starting back from the window. "Here he is now."

Assembly of the guard details had sounded a few moments before, and all over the sunshiny parade on its westward side, in front of the various barracks, little squads of soldiers armed and in full uniform were standing awaiting the next signal, while the porches of the low wooden buildings beyond were dotted with groups of comrades, lazily looking on. Out on the greensward, broad and level, crisscrossed with gravel walks, the band had taken its station, marshalled by the tall drum-major in his huge bear-skin shako. From the lofty flag-staff in the centre of the parade the national colors were fluttering in the mountain breeze that stole down from the snowy peaks hemming the view to the northwest and stirred the leaves of the cottonwoods and the drooping branches of the willows in the bed of the rushing stream sweeping by the southern limits of the garrison. Within the enclosure, sacred to military use, it was all the same old familiar picture, the stereotyped fashion of the frontier fort of the earliest '70s,—dull-hued barracks on one side or on two, dull-hued, broad-porched cottages—the officers' quarters—on another, dull-hued offices, storehouses, corral walls, scattered about the outskirts, a dull-hued, sombre earth on every

side; sombre sweeping prairie beyond, spanned by pallid sky or snow-tipped mountains; a twisting, winding road or two, entering the post on one front, issuing at the other, and tapering off in sinuous curves until lost in the distance; a few scattered ranches in the stream valley; a collection of sheds, shanties, and hovels surrounding a bustling establishment known as the store, down by the ford,—the centre of civilization, apparently, for thither trended every roadway, path, track, or trail visible to the naked eye. Here in front of the office a solitary cavalry horse was tethered. Yonder at the sutler's, early as it was in the day, a dozen quadrupeds, mules, mustangs, or Indian ponies, were blinking in the sunshine. Dogs innumerable sprawled in the sand. Bipeds lolled lazily about or squatted on the steps on the edge of the wooden porch, some in broad sombreros, some in scalp-lock and blanket,—none in the garb of civil life as seen in the nearest cities, and the nearest was four or five hundred miles away. Out on the parade were bits of lively color, the dresses of frolicsome children to the east, the stripes and facings of the cavalry and artillery at the west; for, by some odd freak of the fortunes of war, here, away out at Fort Worth, had come a crack light battery of the old army, which, with Brooks's battalion of the cavalry and head-quarters, staff, band, and six companies of the —th Infantry, made up the garrison,—the biggest then maintained in the Department immortalized by Sheridan as only second choice to Sheol. It was the winter of '70 and '71, as black and dreary a time as ever the army knew, for Congress had telescoped forty-five regiments into half the number and blasted all hopes of promotion,—about the only thing the soldier has to live for.

And that wasn't the blackest thing about the business, by any means. The war had developed the fact that we had thousands of battalion commanders for whom the nation had no place in peace times, and scores of them, in the hope and promise of a life employment in an honorable profession, accepted the tender of lieutenancies in the regular army in '66, the war having broken up all their vocations at home, and now, having given four years more to the military service, —taken all those years out of their lives that might have been given to establishing themselves in business,—they were bidden to choose between voluntarily quitting the army with a bonus of a year's pay, and remaining with no hope of advancement. Most of them, despairing of finding employment in civil life, concluded to stay: so other methods of getting rid of them were devised, and, to the amaze of the army and the dismay of the victims, a big list was published of officers "rendered supernumerary" and summarily discharged. And this was how it happened that a gallant, brilliant, and glad-hearted fellow, the favorite staff officer of a glorious corps commander who fell at the head of his men after three years of equally glorious service, found himself in far-away Texas this blackest of black Fridays, suddenly turned loose on the world and without hope or home.

Cruel was no word for it. Entering the army before the war, one of the few gifted civilians commissioned because they loved the service and then had friends to back them, Edgar Lawrence had joined the cavalry in Texas, where the first thing he did was to fall heels over

head in love with his captain's daughter, and a runaway match resulted. Poor Kitty Tyrrell! Poor Ned Lawrence! Two more unpractical people never lived. She was an army girl with aspirations, much sweetness, and little sense. He was a whole-souled, generous, lavish fellow. Both were extravagant, she particularly so. They were sorely in debt when the war broke out, and he, instead of going in for the volunteers, was induced to become aide-de-camp to his old colonel, who passed him on to another when he retired; and when the war was half over Lawrence was only a captain of staff, and captain he came out at the close. Brevets of course he had, but what are brevets but empty title? What profiteth it a man to be called colonel if he have only the pay of a sub? Hundreds of men who eagerly sought his aid or influence during the war "held over him" at the end of it. Another general took him on his staff as aide-de-camp, where Lawrence was invaluable. Kitty dearly loved city life, parties, balls, operas, and theatres; but Lawrence grew lined and gray with care and worry. The general went the way of all flesh, and Lawrence to Texas, unable to get another staff billet. They set him at court-martial duty at San Antonio for several months, for Texas furnished culprits by the score in the days that followed the war, and many an unpromising army career was cut short by the tribunal of which Captain and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrence was judge advocate; but all the time he had a skeleton in his own closet that by and by rattled its way out. Time was in the war days when many of the men of the head-quarters escort banked their money with the beloved and popular aide. He had nearly twelve hundred dollars when the long columns probed the Wilderness in '64. It was still with him when he was suddenly sent back to Washington with the body of his beloved chief, but every cent was gone before he got there, stolen from him on the steamer from Acquia Creek, and never a trace was found of it thereafter. For years he was paying that off, making it good in driblets, but while he was serving faithfully in Texas, commanding a scout that took him miles and miles away over the Llano Estacado, there were inimical souls who worked the story of his indebtedness to enlisted men for all it was worth, and, aided by the complaints of some of their number, to his grievous disadvantage. He came home from a brilliant dash after the Kiowas to find himself complimented in orders and confronted by charges in one and the same breath. The court acquitted him and "cut" his accusers, but the shame and humiliation of it all seemed to prey upon his spirits; and then Kitty Tyrrell died.

"If that had only happened years before," said the colonel, "it would have been far better for Lawrence, for she conscientiously believed herself the best wife in the world, and spent every cent of his income in dressing up to her conception of the character." Once the most dashing and debonair of captains, poor Ned ran down at the heel and seemed unable to rally. New commanders came to the department, to his regiment, and new officials to the War Office,—men "who knew not Joseph;" and when the drag-net was cast into the whirlpool of army names and army reputations, it was set for scandal, not for services, and the old story of those unpaid hundreds was enmeshed and served

up seasoned with the latest spice obtainable from the dealers rebuked of that original court. And, lo! when the list of victims reached Fort Worth in the reorganization days, old Frazier, the colonel, burst into a string of anathemas, and more than one good woman into a passion of tears, for poor Ned Lawrence, at that moment long days' marches away towards the Rio Bravo, was declared supernumerary and mustered out of the service of the United States with one year's pay,—pay which he could not hope to get until every government account was satisfactorily straightened, and this, too, at a time when the desertion of one sergeant and the death of another revealed the fact that his storehouses had been systematically robbed and that he was hopelessly short in many a costly item charged against him. That heartless order was a month old when the stricken soldier reached his post, and then and there for the first time learned his fate.

Yes, they had tried to break it to him. Letters full of sympathy were written and sent by couriers far to the north; others took them on the Concho trail. Brooks and Frazier both wrote to San Antonio messages thence to be wired to Washington imploring reconsideration; but the deed was done. Astute advisers of the War Secretary clinched the matter by the prompt renomination of others to fill the vacancies just created, and once these were confirmed by the Senate there could be no appeal. The detachment led by Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrence, so later said the Texas papers, had covered itself with glory, but in its pursuit of the fleeing Indians it had gone far to the northeast and so came home by a route no man had dreamed of, and Lawrence, spurring eagerly ahead, rode in at night to fold his motherless little ones to his heart, and found loving army women aiding their faithful old nurse in ministering to them, but read disaster in the tearful eyes and faltering words that welcomed him.

Then he was ill a fortnight, and then he had to go. He could not, would not believe the order final. He clung to the hope that he would find at Washington a dozen men who knew his war record, who could remember his gallant services in a dozen battles, his popularity and prominence in the Army of the Potomac. Everybody knows the favorite aide-de-camp of a corps commander when colonels go begging for recognition, and everybody has a cheery, cordial word for him so long as he and his general live and serve together. But that proves nothing when the general is gone. Colonels who eagerly welcomed and shook hands with the aide-de-camp and talked confidentially with him about other colonels in days when he rode long hours by his general's side, later passed him by with scant notice, and "always thought him a much overrated man." Right here at Fort Worth were fellows who, six or seven years before, would have given a month's pay to win Ned Lawrence's influence in their behalf,—for, like "Perfect" Bliss of the Mexican war days, Lawrence was believed to write his general's despatches and reports,—but who now shrank uneasily out of his way for fear that he should ask a favor.

Even Brooks, who liked and had spoken for him, drew back from the window when with slow, heavy steps the sad-faced, haggard man came slowly along the porch. The orderly sprang up and stood at

salute just as adjutant's call sounded, and the band pealed forth its merry, spirited music. For a moment the new-comer turned and glanced back over the parade, now dotted with little details all marching out to the line where stood the sergeant-major; then he turned, entered the building, and paused with hopeless eyes and pallid, care-worn features at the office doorway. His old single-breasted captain's frock-coat, with its tarnished silver leaves at the shoulders, hung loosely about his shrunken form. The trousers, with their narrow welt of yellow at the seam, looked far too big for him. His forage-cap, still natty in shape, was old and worn. His chin and cheeks bristled with a stubbly grayish beard. All the old alert manner was gone. The once bright eyes were bleary and dull. Neighbors said that poor Ned had been drinking deep of the contents of a demijohn a sympathetic soul had sent him, and half an eye could tell that his lip was tremulous. The colonel arose and held out his hand.

"Come in, Lawrence, old fellow, and tell me what I can do for you." He spoke kindly, and Brooks, too, turned towards the desolate man.

"You've done—all you could—both of you. God bless you!" was the faltering answer. "I've come to say I start at once. I'm going right to Washington to have this straightened out. I want to thank you, colonel, and you too, Brooks, for all your willing help. I'll try to show my appreciation of it when I get back."

"But Ada and little Jim, Lawrence; surely they're not ready for that long journey yet," said Frazier, thinking sorrowfully of what his wife had told him only the day before,—that they had no decent winter clothing to their names.

"It's all right. Old Mammy stays right here with them. She has taken care of them, you know, ever since my poor wife died. I can keep my old quarters a month, can't I?" he queried, with a quivering smile. "Even if the order isn't revoked, it would be a month or more before any one could come to take my place. Mrs. Blythe will look after the children day and night."

Frazier turned appealingly to Brooks, who shook his head and refused to speak, and so the colonel had to.

"Lawrence, God knows I hate to say one word of discouragement, but I fear—I fear you'd better wait till next week's stage and take those poor little folks with you. I've watched this thing. I know how a dozen good fellows, confident as yourself, have gone on to Washington and found it all useless."

"It can't be useless, sir," burst in the captain, impetuously. "Truth is truth and must prevail. If after all my years of service I can find no friends in the War Office, then life is a lie and a sham. Senator Hall writes me that he will leave no stone unturned. No, colonel, I take the stage at noon to-day. Will you let Winn ride with me as far as Castle Peak? I've got to run down and see Fuller now."

"Winn can go with you, certainly; but indeed, Lawrence, I shall have to see you again about this."

"I'll stop on the way back," said Lawrence, nervously. "Fuller promised to see me before he went out to his ranch." And hastily the captain turned away.

For a moment the two seniors stood there silently gazing into each other's eyes. "What can one do or say?" asked the colonel, at last. "I suppose Fuller is going to let him have money for the trip. He can afford to, God knows, after all he's made out of this garrison. But the question is, ought I not to make poor Lawrence understand that it's a gone case? He is legally out already. His successor is on his way here. I got the letter this morning."

"On his way here? Who is he?" queried the major, in sudden interest. "They didn't know when Stone came through San Antonio ten days ago."

"Man named Barclay; just got his captaincy in the 30th,—consolidated out of that, of course."

"Barclay—Barclay, you say?" ejaculated the major, in excitement. "Well, of all the——"

"Of all the what?" demanded the colonel, impatiently. "Nothing wrong with him, I hope."

"Wrong? No, or they wouldn't have dubbed him Galahad. But, talk about ups and downs in Texas, this beats all. Does Winn know?"

"I don't know that any one knows but you and me," answered the veteran, half testily. "What's amiss? What has Winn to do with it?"

"Blood and blue blazes! Why, of course you couldn't know. Three years ago Barclay believed himself engaged to a girl, and she threw him over for Winn, and now we'll have all three of them right here at Worth."

CHAPTER II.

In spite of what Colonel Frazier could say, Captain Lawrence had gone the long and devious journey to Washington. Those were the days when the lumbering stage-coach once a week, or a rattling ambulance, bore our army travellers from the far frontier to San Antonio. Another trundled and bumped them away to the Gulf. A Morgan Line steamer picked them up and tossed and rolled with them to the mouth of the Mississippi and unloaded them at New Orleans, whence by dusty railway journey of forty-eight hours or more they could hope to reach the North. The parting between Lawrence and his tall slip of a daughter and boisterous little Jimmy was something women wept over in telling or hearing, for only two looked on, well-nigh blinded,—Mrs. Blythe, who had been devoted to their mother, and old "Mammy," who was devoted to them all. A month had rolled by, and the letters that came from Lawrence from San Antonio and Indianola and New Orleans had been read by sympathizing friends to the children. Then all awaited the news from Washington. Every one knew he would wire to Department Head-Quarters the moment the case was settled in his favor; but the days went by without other tidings, and the croakers who had predicted ill success were mournfully happy. February passed, March was ushered in; orders came transferring certain portions of Frazier's big command, and certain new officers began to arrive

to fill the three or four vacancies existing, but the new captain of Troop "D" of the cavalry had not yet appeared. His fame, however, had preceded him, and all Fort Worth was agog to meet him. Brooks knew but a modest bit of his story, and what he knew he kept from every man but Frazier, yet had had to tell his wife. The Winns were silent on the subject. Winn himself was a man of few intimates,—a young first lieutenant of cavalry,—and the tie that bound him to Lawrence was the fact that he and Kitty Tyrrell were first-cousins, their mothers sisters, and Winn, a tall, athletic, slender fellow, frank, buoyant, handsome, and connected with some of the best names in the old army, was one of the swells of his class at the Point and the beau among all the young officers the summer of his graduation,—the summer that Laura Waite, engaged to Brevet Captain Galbraith Barclay of the Infantry, came from the West to visit relatives at that enchanting spot, spent just six weeks there, and, after writing letters all one month to close her absent lover's eyes, wound up by writing one that opened them. She was a beautiful girl then ; she was a lovely-looking woman now, but the bloom was gone. The brilliant eyes were often clouded, for Harry Winn was "his aunt Kitty all over," said many a man who knew them both. Their name was impecuniosity. That Mrs. Winn could tell much about the coming captain letters from other regiments informed more than one bright woman at Worth ; but that the young matron would tell next to nothing, more than one woman, bright or blundering, discovered on inquiry. Only one officer now at the post had ever served with Barclay, and that was Brooks, who became tongue-tied so soon as it was settled beyond peradventure that Captain Galbraith Barclay from the unassigned list had been gazetted to the 12th Cavalry, Troop "D," *vice* Lawrence, honorably discharged. But Brooks had letters, so had Frazier, from old officers who had served with the transferred man. Some of these letters referred to him in terms of admiration, while another spoke of him unhesitatingly as "more kinds of a damned fool" than the writer had ever met. Verily, various men have various minds.

Presently, however, there came a man who could tell lots about Barclay, whether he knew anything or not, and that was one of the new transfers, Lieutenant Hodge by title and name. Hodge said he had served with the 30th along the Union Pacific, and had met Barclay often. In his original regiment Mr. Hodge had been regarded as a very monotonous sort of man, a fellow who bored his hearers to death, and the contrast between his reception in social circles in the regiment he had left, and that accorded him here at Worth so soon as it was learned that he knew Barclay, inspired Mr. Hodge to say that *these* people were worth knowing ; they had some life and intelligence about them. The gang he had left in Wyoming were a stupid lot of owls by comparison. For a week Hodge was invited to dinner by family after family, and people dropped in to spend the evening where he happened to be, for Hodge held the floor and talked for hours about Barclay, and what he had to tell was interesting indeed ; so much so, said Brooks, that some of it was probably a preposterous lie. To begin with, said Hodge, Captain Barclay was rich, very rich, fabu-

lously rich, perhaps; nobody knew how rich, and nobody would have known he was rich at all, judging from the simplicity and strict economy of his life. In fact, it was this simplicity and strict economy that had given rise to the belief that existed for a year or two after he joined the 30th that he was hampered either with debts or with dependent relatives. Relatives they knew he had, because sisters sent their boys to visit him at Sanders, and he took them hunting, fishing, etc.; from these ingenuous nephews the ladies learned of others, nephews, nieces, sisters, cousins, aunts, who wrote long letters to Uncle Gal, and the mail orderly said he left more letters at Captain Barclay's quarters than at anybody's else. So Fort Sanders dropped the theory of debts and adopted that of dependants, and that held good for the first year of his service with them. He had joined from the volunteers, where he had risen to the grade of major. He was "pious," said Hodges,—wouldn't drink, smoke, chew, play cards, or swear,—thought they ought to have services on Sunday. He left the roistering bachelors' mess soon after his reaching the post, and had ever since kept house, his cook and housemaid being one old darky whom he had "accumulated" in the South during the war,—a darky who had been well taught in the household of his old master, and who became extravagantly attached to the new. Hannibal could cook, wait at table, and tend door to perfection, but he had to learn the duties of second girl when his master joined the 30th in far Wyoming, and that was the only time a breach was threatened. Hannibal's dignity was hurt. He had been body-servant in the ante-bellum days, butler, cook, coachman, and hostler, but had never done such chores as Marse Barclay told him would fall to his lot when that reticent officer set up his modest establishment. Hannibal sulked three days, and even talked of leaving. The lieutenant counted out a goodly sum, all Hannibal's own, and told him that he would find the balance banked in his name in the distant East whenever he chose to quit; then Hannibal broke down, and was speedily broken in. All this had Hodge heard when the dames of Sanders and those of Steele or Russell were comparing notes and picnicking together along that then new wonder of the world, the Union Pacific. But all this was only preliminary to what came later.

Little detachments, horse and foot, were scattered all over the line of the brand-new railway while it was being built; every now and then the Indians jumped their camps and working-parties, and in the late fall of '67 Barclay had a stiff and plucky fight with a band of Sioux; he was severely wounded, but beat them off, and was sent East to recuperate. Now came particulars Hodge could not give, but that letters could and did. It was while Barclay was convalescing at Omaha Barracks that he met Miss Laura Waite,—a beautiful girl and a garrison belle. She was ten years his junior. This was her first winter in army society. She had spent her girl years at school, and now was having "simply a heavenly time," if her letters could be believed. Her father was a field officer of cavalry with rather a solemn way of looking at life, and her mother was said to be the explanation of much of his solemnity,—she being as volatile as he was staid. She too had been a

beauty, and believed that beauty a permanent fixture. But Laura was fresh and fair, sweet and winsome, light-hearted and joyous, and the father for a time took more pride in her than he did in his sons. Major Waite was in command of the cantonment from which the relief party was sent when the news came that Barclay and his little detachment were "corralled." Major Waite became enthusiastic over the details of the cool, courageous, brainy defence made by the young officer against tremendous odds, covered him with all manner of thoughtful care and attention when he was brought into the cantonment, then, when the winter soon set in and the camp broke up, and Waite went back to Omaha Barracks, he took Barclay with him to his house instead of the hospital, and the rest followed as the night the day.

Barclay spent a month under the major's roof, won his esteem and friendship, but left his heart in the daughter's hands. If ever a man devotedly loved a beautiful, winsome young girl, that man was Galbraith Barclay; if ever a girl's father approved of a man, that man was Barclay; and if ever a man had reason to hope that his suit would win favor in a father's eyes, that man was Barclay; yet it did not. Major Waite's reply to the modest yet most manful plea of Lieutenant Barclay to be permitted to pay his addresses to the major's daughter surprised every one to whom Mrs. Waite confided it, and they were not few. The old soldier begged of the younger not to think of it, at least just yet. But when it transpired that the younger had been most seriously thinking of it and could think of nothing else, then the major changed his tune and told him what he did not tell his wife; and that only became known through the father's own intemperate language long months after. He told Barclay he knew no man to whom he would rather intrust his daughter's happiness, but he feared, he believed, she was still too young to know her own mind, too young to see in Barclay what he saw, and he urged that the young officer should wait. But Barclay knew *his* own mind. He was able, he said, to provide for her in comfort either in or out of the army, which few possible aspirants could say. He would listen to no demur, and then at last the father said, "Try your fate if you will, but let there be no thought of marriage before she is twenty,—before she can have had opportunity of seeing something of the world and of other men,—not these young whippersnappers just joining us here."

It was a surprise to him that Laura should accept Mr. Barclay. She came to him, her father, all happy smiles and tears and blushes, and told him how proud and glad a girl she was, because she thought her lover the best and noblest man she ever dreamed of except her own dear old dad. For a time Waite took heart and hoped for the best, and believed her and her mother, as indeed they believed themselves; and when Barclay went back to Sanders at the end of January he was a very happy man, and Laura for a week a very lonely girl. Then youth, health, elasticity, vivacity, opportunity, all prevailed, and she began to take notice in very joyous fashion. She did not at all recognize the doctrine preached by certain mammas and certain other damsels, that she as an engaged girl should hold aloof now and give the other girls, not so pretty, a chance. The barracks were gay that winter:

Laura danced with the gayest, and when Barclay got leave in April and came down for a fortnight he found himself much in the way of two young gentlemen who danced delightfully, a thing he could not do at all. Yet he had sweet hours with his sweetheart, and grew even more deeply in love, so beautiful was she growing, and went back to Sanders a second time thinking himself happiest of the happy, or bound to be when, in the coming autumn, he could claim her as his own. But Waite was troubled. He was to take the field the 1st of May; his troops would be in saddle and on scout away to the west all summer long; his wife and daughter were to spend those months at the sea-shore and in shopping for the great event to come in November. He had a long, earnest talk with Barclay when once more the devoted fellow came to see the lady of his love on the eve of her departure for the East, but Barclay looked into her radiant, uplifted eyes, and could not read the shadow of coming events, of which she was as ignorant as he. In May he led his men on the march to the Big Horn, and in June she led with Cadet Lieutenant Winn the german at the graduation hop at West Point. Then Winn was assigned to duty, as was the custom of the day, one of two or three young graduates chosen as assistant instructors during the summer camp. He had an hour to devote to drill each morning and a dozen to devote to the girls, and Laura Waite, with her lovely face and form, was the talk of the brilliant throng of visitors that summer. She and her mother returned to the Point as guests of some old friends there stationed, a visit which was not on the original programme at all. Winn took the girl riding day after day, and to hops week after week. The shopping for the wedding went on betweentimes, and Winn even escorted them to the city and took part in the shopping. In fine, when November came, in spite of the furious opposition of her father, in spite of his refusal to attend the ceremony or to countenance it in any way, Winn, *vice* Barclay, honorably discharged, appeared as groom, and bore his bride away to a round of joyous festivities among army friends in New Orleans and San Antonio before their final exile to the far frontier. From that day to this no line had ever come from the angered and aging man, even when Laura's baby girl was born. Funds he sent from time to time,—he knew he'd have to do that, as he told her mother and she told her friends,—and then, just as more funds were much needed because of pressing claims of creditors whose bills had not been paid from previous remittances, Winn being much in the field and Laura becoming disburser general in his absence, the major suddenly died, leaving a small life insurance for his disconsolate widow and nothing to speak of for his children. They had sucked him dry during his busy life.

The Winns did not invite Mr. Hodge to dinner, and were not bidden to meet him. Laura was still in light mourning for her father, and for days she really heard very little of Hodge's revelations regarding her discarded Wyoming lover. It was through the nurse-girl, an old soldier's daughter, that she first began to glean the chaff of the stories flitting from house to house, and to hear the exaggeration of Hodge's romancings about Captain Barclay's wealth, for that, after all,

proved the most vividly interesting of the travellers' tales he told. Barclay proved to be, said Hodge, an expert mineralogist and geologist, and this was of value when a craze for dabbling in mining stocks swept over Sanders. Barclay, who lived so simply in garrison, was discovered (through a breach of confidence on the part of the officiating clergyman, that well-nigh led to another breach) to be the principal subscriber to the mission church being built in Laramie City. It suddenly became known that Barclay had a balance in the local bank and reserve funds at the East, whereupon promoters and prospectors by the dozen called upon him at the fort and strove to induce him to take stock in their mines. Nine out of ten were sent to the right-about, even those who called his attention to the fact that Colonel This and Major That were large shareholders. One or two he gave ear to, and later got leave of absence and visited their distant claims. He was out prospecting, said Hodge, half the time in the fall of '68. The ventures of the other officers seemed to prove prolific sources of assessments. The Lord only knows how much fun and money the mine-owners of those days got out of the army. But they failed to impress the puritanical captain, and by the summer of '69 they ceased to do business in his neighborhood, for before sending good money after bad, officers had taken to consulting Barclay, and many an honest fellow's hoarded savings were spared to his wife and children, all through Barclay's calm and patient exposition of the fallacy of the "Company's" claims.

Then, said Hodge, when Channing, of the 27th, was killed by Red Cloud's band back of Laramie Peak, and his heart-broken widow and children were left penniless, somebody found the money to send them all to their friends in New England and to see them safely established there. And when Porter's wife was taken so ill while he was away up north of the Big Horn, and the doctor said that a trained nurse must be had in the first place, there came one from far Chicago; and later, after Porter reached the post, overjoyed to find his beloved one slowly mending and so skilfully guarded, the doctors told him she must be taken to the sea-shore or the South, and, though every one at Sanders knew poor Porter had not a penny, it was all arranged somehow, and Emily Porter came back the next winter a rosy, blooming, happy wife. No one knew for certain that all the needed money came from Barclay, but as the Porters seemed to adore him from that time on, and their baby boy was baptized Galbraith Barclay, everybody had reason to believe it. If Mrs. Winn ever wanted to experience the exhilaration of hearing what other people thought of her, she had only, said Mr. Hodge in confidence, to turn Mrs. Porter loose on that subject.

Then, too, said Hodge, there was Ordnance Sergeant Murphy and his family, burned out one winter's night with all their savings, and the old man dreadfully scorched in trying to rescue his strong box from the flames. It must have been Barclay who looked after the mother and kids all the time the old man was moaning in hospital. They moved him into a newly furnished and comfortable shack inside of a fortnight, and the Murphys had another saint on their domestic calendar, despite the non-appearance of his name in the voluminous

records of their Church. All this and more did Hodge tell of Barclay, as in duty bound, he said, after first telling what other fellows long said of him,—that he was close and mean, a prig, a namby-pamby (despite the way he fought Crow-Killer's warlike band), a wet blanket to garrison joys, etc., etc.; and yet they really couldn't tell why. He subscribed just as much to the hop fund, though he didn't hop,—to the supper fund, though he didn't sup,—to the mess fund for the entertainment of visiting officers, though he didn't drink,—to the dramatic fund, though he couldn't act,—to the garrison hunt, though they said he couldn't ride. But he declined to give one cent towards the deficiency bill that resulted when Sanders entertained Steele at an all-night symposium at the sutler's and opened case after case of champagne and smoked box after box of cigars. "It was a senseless, soulless proceeding," said he, with brutal frankness. "Half the money you drank or smoked up in six hours could have clothed and fed all the children in Sudstown for six months."

"Lord, but they were mad all through," said Hodge, when describing it. "There wasn't a name they didn't call him all that winter."

"And yet I hear," said Mrs. Tremaine, a woman Fort Worth loved and looked up to as the —th did to Mrs. Stannard, "that for a long time past they have called him Sir Galahad instead of Galbraith."

"Oh," said Hodge, "that's one of old Gleason's jokes. He said they called him 'Gal I had' when he went to Omaha and 'Gal I hadn't' when he got back,"—a statement which sent Major Brooks swearing *sotto voce* from the room.

"I don't know which I'd rather kick," said he, "Hodge or Gleason. I'd rejoice in Barclay's coming if it weren't—if Lawrence were only here, if Winn were only away."

CHAPTER III.

An unhappy man was Major Brooks that gloomy month of March. The news from Washington *via* Department Head-Quarters was most discouraging as to Lawrence. He was both looking and doing ill. It seemed to "break him all up," said a letter from a friend in the Adjutant-General's office, that so few could be found to urge the Secretary to do something for him. What could they do? was the answer. Admitting that Lawrence had been grievously wronged, "whose fault was it?" said the Secretary; "not mine." He had only acted on the information and recommendation of officers to whom this work had been intrusted. If they had erred, he should have been informed of it before. "How could you be informed," said the Senator who had championed the poor fellow's cause, "when you resorted to a system that would have shamed a Spaniard in the days of the Inquisition, or the Bourbons with their *lettres de cachet* and the Bastile?" No one dreamed that Lawrence was in danger until he was done to death, and so, out of money, out of clothes, out of hope, health,

and courage, poor Ned was fretting his heart out, while tender women and loyal friends were keeping guard over his shabby army home and caring for his two motherless lambs away out on the far frontier, awaiting the day when he should be restored to them.

It did not come, nor did Lawrence. An old comrade of the Sixth Corps, a gallant volunteer brigade commander, then in prosperous circumstances at Washington, had given him the shelter of his home, only too gladly keeping him in rations and cigars, as he would have done in clothes and pocket-money, but he shook his head at whiskey. "For God's sake, Ned, and for your babies' sake, leave that alone. It can't help you. You never were a drinking man before. Don't drink now, or your nerve will give out utterly." This and more he urged and pleaded, but Lawrence's pride seemed crushed and his heart broken. Legal advisers told his friends at last that restoration was impossible: his place was filled. He had only one course left if he would listen to nothing but restoration to the army, and that was to accept a second lieutenancy and begin over again at the bottom of the list. They broached it to him, and he broke out into wild, derisive laughter. "Good God! do you mean that a man who has served fifteen years in the army, fought all through the war and served as I have served, must step down from the squadron captaincy to ride behind the boys just out of the Point? be ranked out of quarters by my own son-in-law the next thing I know! I'll see the army in hell first," was his furious reply.

"No, Ned, not hell, but Texas. Take it; go back to the line, and once you're back in the army in any grade we'll legislate you up to the majority you deserve: see if we don't."

But Lawrence had lost all faith in promises, or in Congressional action. He turned in contempt from the proposition, and in early April came the tidings to San Antonio that he was desperately ill.

Meanwhile Mr. Hodge had lost the *prestige* of his first appearance at Worth, and fell into the customary rut of the subaltern. People found him as monotonous as did the martyrs of the Upper Platte, and, from having been the most sought-after of second lieutenants, he dropped back to the plane of semi-obscurity. This was galling. Hodge's stock in trade had been the facts or fables in his possession concerning the absent Captain Barclay, whose present whereabouts and plans were shrouded in mystery. A rumor came that he had decided not to join at all; that he was in Washington striving to arrange a transfer; that his assignment to the regiment and to the post where he must meet the woman who had jilted him for a cavalry subaltern was something unforeseen and not to be tolerated. The muster roll couldn't account for him other than as permitted to delay three months by Special Orders No. So-and-so, War Department, A.G.O., January 25, 1871. This gave Hodge unlooked-for reinforcements. A fortnight passed in March without a bid to dinner anywhere, without a request for further particulars as to Sir Galahad. So long as that interesting personage was expected any day to appear and answer for himself, it behooved Hodge to be measurably guarded in his statements, to keep within the limits of his authorities; but one day there came a letter

from a lady at Department Head-Quarters to Mrs. Brooks, and before Brooks himself was made aware of the contents, he being at the club-room playing "pitch" and therefore beyond the pale of feminine consideration, the news was going the rounds of the garrison.

Mrs. Pelham, who was spending the winter in Washington, had written to an old and devoted friend of Major Waite's some very interesting news about Captain Barclay. The captain was in Washington a whole week, but had not called on Mrs. Pelham, though she had done everything she could think of for him when he was wounded. (The Pelhams were then at McPherson and near old Waite's summer camp, but no one ever heard of her ladyship's ever taking the faintest interest in Barclay until after he developed into a mine-owner and had been jilted by Laura Waite.) But let Mrs. Pelham talk for herself, as she usually did, as well as for every one else. "He spent the first week in February here, leaving just before poor Captain Lawrence came. No wonder he didn't wish to meet him! And Mrs. Waite was there, buttonholing everybody to get her pension increased, and wearing the costliest crape you ever saw, my dear, and—think of it!—solitaire diamond ear-rings with it! She had a room in a house where several prominent Congressmen boarded, and was known as 'the fascinating widow.' She sent to Barclay,—would you believe it?—and begged him to come to see her, and he *actually did;* and Mrs. Cutts, who lives in the same house, told me that you ought to have seen her that day,—no solitaire ear-rings or handsome crape, mind you, but tears and bombazine; and Mrs. Cutts vows that he gave her money. That woman is angling for another husband, and has been ever since poor Waite's death, and if anything were to happen to Mr. Winn it's just what Laura would be doing too. It runs in the blood, my dear. You know, and I know, that all the time she was at Omaha Barracks and the major in the field, she—a woman with a grown son and a graduating daughter—was dancing with the boys at the hops and riding—yes, and buggy-riding—with bachelors like those wretches Gates and Hagadorn." Buggy-riding was the unpardonable sin in Mrs. Pelham's eyes, she being "too massive to sit in anything short of the side seat of an ambulance," as said a regimental wit; and Mrs. Pelham looked with eyes of disfavor on women who managed to "keep their waists" as Mrs. Waite did.

"But let me tell you about Captain Barclay," continued the letter. "General Corliss called to see me two evenings ago and said he heard that Barclay was actually a millionaire,—that he had large interests in Nevada mines that were proving fabulously rich. You can understand that I wasn't at all surprised to hear that the general had intimated to Mr. Ray, of his staff, that it would be much better for him to go and serve with his regiment awhile. Ray wouldn't be an acceptable son-in-law; he has no money and too many fascinations, and there are both the Corliss girls, you know, to be provided for, and Miranda is already *passée*, and Ray has resigned the place, and the place is vacant, for—would you believe it?—they say the general tendered it to Barclay, and Barclay declined. Why, when we were all at McPherson there wasn't anything satirical the Corlisses didn't say about Barclay, and

now that he has money they bow down to and worship him." ("Something Mrs. Pelham wouldn't do for the world," said Mrs. Brooks to herself, with an odd smile.) "And when the general was asked about it yesterday he couldn't deny having made the offer, but said the reason Captain Barclay declined was that he would very probably resign in a few weeks, his business interests being such as to render it necessary for him to leave the army. So, my dear, you won't have the millionaire in Texas, after all, and I fancy how deeply Laura Winn will be disappointed. No matter how much she cares for her husband, she wouldn't be her mother's daughter if she didn't try to fascinate him over again."

Fancy the comfort of having such a letter as that to read to an appreciative audience! Mrs. Brooks fled with it to Mrs. Frazier, who thought it ought not to be read,—it was too like Dorothy Pelham for anything. But Mrs. Brooks took and read it to neighbors who were chatting and sewing together and had no such scruples. And that night it was dribbling about the post that Barclay had decided to resign, had refused a detail on the staff of General Corliss: somebody else would get Ned Lawrence's troop. Brooks heaved a sigh and said to himself he was glad of it, and the women heaved a sigh and wished he might have come, if only for a little while, just to make things interesting: "it would be such a novelty to have a millionaire mine-owner in garrison and actually doing duty as a captain of cavalry." Finally they began to wonder what Mrs. Winn would say now, she having had nothing at all to say.

That very evening it chanced to occur to Mr. Hodge that he had not returned Lieutenant Winn's call (by card,—the cavalryman having dropped in when he knew the new arrival to have dropped out), and when Hodge presented himself at the Winns' (he had spoken of his intention at mess in the presence and hearing of the negro attendant, who had mentioned it without delay to the Winns' colored combination of cook and serving-maid, who had come over to borrow a cup of cooking sherry, it being too far to the sutler's, and that damsel had duly notified her mistress of the intended honor), he was shown into the dimly lighted army sitting-room, where, toasting her feet before the fire, sat dreaming the young mistress of the establishment, who started up in apparent surprise. She had heard neither the step nor the ring. Very possibly she was dozing, she admitted, for baby was sleeping aloft and her husband was gone. She was attired in a silken gown that Hodge described somewhat later at the major's as "puffickly stunning,"—a garment that revealed the rich curves of her beautiful throat and neck and arms; women who heard wondered why she should be wearing that most becoming evening robe when there was not even a hop. She looked handsomer than the gown, said Hodge, as she rose and greeted him, her cheeks flushed, her eyes languorous and smouldering at first, then growing slowly brilliant. She apologized for the absence of Mr. Winn. He was spending much time at the office just now. "He is regimental commissary, you know, or at least he has been," she explained. Hodge knew all about that, and he also knew that if what he heard about the post was true it would have been better had Winn

spent more time at the office before. Then Mrs. Winn was moved to be gracious. She had heard so many, many pleasant things of Mr. Hodge since his arrival. She was so honored that he should call when he must be having so many claims on his time, so many dinner-calls to pay. She and Mr. Winn were so sorry they had been unable to entertain Mr. Hodge, but, until the cook they were expecting from San Antonio came, they were positively starving, and could invite no one to share their scraps. "That cook has been expected a whole year," said other women, but Mrs. Winn paraded him as the cause of her social shortcomings as confidently as ever. Then Mrs. Winn went on to speak of how much she had heard of Hodge at Omaha,—dear Omaha. "What lovely times we had along the Platte in the good old days!" Hodge blushed with joy, and preened and twittered and thought how blessed a thing it was to be welcomed to the fireside of such a belle and beauty and to be remembered by her as one of the gay young bachelors at Sidney. "Such wicked stories as we heard of you scapegraces from time to time," said she, whereat Hodge looked as though he might, indeed, have been shockingly wicked, as perhaps he had. Indeed, she feared they, the young officers, were "a sad lot, a sad lot," and looked up at him from under the drooping lashes in a way that prompted him to an inspiration that was almost electric in its effect on him. Hodge fairly seemed to sparkle, to scintillate. "Sad! We were in despair," said he, "but that was when we heard of your engagement—oh, ah, the second one, I mean," he stumbled on, for it would never do, thought he, to mention the first.

But he need have had no hesitation. Laura Winn had heard from other and obscurer sources something of the rumors floating over the post that very day. She had planned to drop in at the colonel's, where the Fraziers entertained at dinner and music that very evening, in hopes of hearing accidentally something definite, for Winn was one of those useless husbands who never hear anything of current gossip. But women might not talk if they thought she wished to hear, and fate had provided her a better means. She saw here and now the opportunity and the man. It was Hodge who had told so much that was of vivid interest to her. It was Hodge she had been longing to meet for days, but Winn had held him aloof, and now here she had this ingenuous repository of Barclayisms all to herself until Winn should return; the chance was not to be lost.

"I love to live over those dear old days when I was a girl," she said. "Friends seemed so real then, men so true, life so buoyant. Sometimes I find myself wishing there were more of the old friends, the old set, here. We seem—so much more to each other, don't you know, Mr. Hodge?" And Hodge felt sure "we" did, and hitched his chair a foot nearer the fire.

"Of course I was younger then, and knew so little of the world, and yet, knowing it as I do now—I can say this to you, you know, Mr. Hodge,—I couldn't to another soul here, for you were *of* us, you served with father's column" (Hodge's service was limited to playing poker with "those wretches Gates and Hagadorn" and others of Waite's command on one or two memorable occasions, and the resultant

hole in his purse was neither as broad as a church nor deep as a well, but 'twould serve). "I've often felt here as though I would give anything to see some of the dear old crowd; not that people are not very, very lovely here, but, you know, we army friends cling so to the old associations." And now the beautiful eyes seemed almost suffused, and Hodge waxed eloquent.

"I am thrice fortunate," said he, recalling the lines of his Maltravers, "in that I am numbered among them." And now, like Laura, he looked upon Worth as cold and dormant as compared with the kindling friendships of the distant Platte.

"Indeed you are!" said she. "You bring back the sweetest days of my life, and some of the saddest. I have no one to speak to me, you know,—of course—until you did a moment ago. Tell me, is—is his life so changed as—they say it is?"

"I never saw a man so broke up," he responded. "He never smiled after you—after—after it was broken off, you know." Barclay's smile was as rare as a straight flush anyhow, he admitted to himself, but the assertion sounded well.

"And—of late—what have you heard of him?" she asked. And Hodge poured forth his latest news, and added more. He, too, he said, had had a letter from an intimate friend. Captain Barclay had declared that the assignment to the Twelfth Cavalry was impossible, Texas was impossible. His business interests would necessitate his declining if, indeed, there were no other reasons. General Corliss had tendered him the position of aide-de-camp and made Billy Ray of the —th resign to make way for him, and the moment Barclay found that out he went to Ray and told him the whole business was without his (Barclay's) knowledge, and sooner than displace him he would refuse. "Yes," said Hodge, "that's the way my friend heard it from Ray himself. Now, if Barclay could only get a detail on McDowell's staff in California it would have suited him to a tee; then he could have looked after his Nevada interests and his Wyoming pensioners too."

Did Mr. Hodge know surely about Mr. Barclay's wealth? Was it all true? he was asked.

Oh, yes, there wasn't a doubt of it, said Hodge. It was just another of those cases where a man had money in abundance, and yet would have given it all, he added, sentimentally, but here she uplifted rebukingly her white, slim hand,—or was it warningly? for there came a quick footfall on the porch without. The hall door opened sharply, letting in a gust of cold night wind, and, throwing off his cavalry cape with its faded yellow lining, Lieutenant Winn strode through the hallway into his little den at the rear.

"You will come and see me again," she murmured low, while yet the footsteps resounded, "it has been so—good to see you,—so like old times. We'll have to talk of other things now. Mr. Winn doesn't like old times too well."

But Mr. Winn never so much as looked in the parlor door until she called to him. Then, as she saw his face, the young wife arose with anxiety in her own.

"What is it? Where are you going—with your revolver, too? Mr. Hodge, dear."

"Oh-h! Beg pardon, Mr. Hodge. Glad to see you," was Winn's distraught acknowledgment of the presence of the visitor, as he extended a reluctant hand. "My sergeant can't be found," he went on, hurriedly. "They say he's gone to Fuller's ranch, and it may be all right, but the colonel has ordered out a patrol to fetch him back. Don't worry, Laurie; I may have to ride out with it."

And hurriedly he kissed her and bounded down the steps.

For a moment she stood in the doorway, the light from the hall lamp shining on her dusky hair and proud, beautiful face, forgetful of the man who stood gazing at her. Then with a shiver she suddenly turned.

"It's the second time that Sergeant Marsden has been missed in just this way, when he was most needed, and—it's so imprudent, so—and my husband is so imprudent, so unsuspicious. Mr. Hodge," she cried, impulsively, "if you've heard anything, or if you do hear anything, about him or Mr. Winn, be a friend to me and tell me, won't you?" And there was nothing Hodge would not have promised, nothing he would not have told, but the door of the adjoining quarters slammed, an officer came striding along the porch common to the double set, and the clank of a sabre was heard as he neared them.

"Winn gone?" he asked. "Don't worry, Mrs. Winn. We'll overhaul that scoundrel before he can reach the settlements, unless——"

"But what is wrong? What has happened, Mr. Brayton?" she asked, her face white with dread, her heart fluttering.

"My Lord, Mrs. Winn, I beg your pardon! I supposed of course he had told you. Marsden's bolted. Colonel Riggs, the inspector-general, got here to-night with Captain Barclay, instead of coming by regular stage Saturday, and Marsden lit out the moment he heard of their arrival. Of course we hope Winn isn't badly bitten."

But her thoughts were of another matter now. "Captain Barclay," she faltered, "here? Why, I—I heard——"

"Yes," shouted the young officer, as he went clattering down the steps. "'Scuse me—I've got to mount at once," as an orderly came running up at the moment with his horse. "Riggs has come, post-haste, only Barclay and one man with him besides the driver. It's lucky that Friday gang never got wind of it."

CHAPTER IV.

For forty-eight hours Fort Worth was in turmoil. To begin with, the sudden, unheralded advent of a department inspector in those days meant something ominous, and from Frazier down to the drum-boys the garrison scented mischief the moment that familiar old black-hooded, dust-covered spring wagon, drawn by the famous six-mule team, came spinning in across the *mesa* just after retreat, no escort whatever being in sight. Cavalrymen had trotted alongside, said Riggs,

from two of the camps on the way, but they had made that long day's drive from Crockett Springs all alone, trusting to luck that the Friday gang, so called, would not get wind of it. Just who and how many constituted that array of outlaws no man, including its own membership, could accurately say. Two paymasters, two wagon-trains, and no end of mail-stages had been "jumped" by those enterprising road agents in the course of the five years that followed the war, and not once had a conviction occurred. Arrests had been made by marshals, sheriffs, and officers in command of detachments, but a more innocent lot of victims, according to the testimony of friends and fellow-citizens, never dwelt in Dixie. Three only of their number had been killed and left for recognition in the course of those three years. One only of these was known, and the so-called Friday gang managed to surround its haunts, its movements, and its membership with a mystery that defied civil officials and baffled the military. Escorts the size of a cavalry platoon had been needed every time a disbursing officer went to and fro, and a sizable squad accompanied the stage whenever it carried even a moderate amount of treasure. At three points along the road from the old Mexican capital to the outlying posts, strong detachments of cavalry had been placed in camp, so that relays of escorts might be on hand when needed. At three different times within the past two years, strong *posses* had gone with the civil officials far into the foot-hills in search of the haunts of the band, but no occupied haunt was ever found, no band of any size or consequence ever encountered; yet depredations were incessant. The mail-stage came and went with guarded deliberation. The quartermaster's trains were accompanied by at least a company of infantry. The sutler's wagons travelled with the quartermaster's train, and the sutler's money went to San Antonio only when the quartermaster and commissary sent theirs, and then a whole squadron had been known to ride in charge. Anything from a wagon-train down to a buckboard was game for the gang, and soldiers, ranchmen, and prospectors told stories of having been halted, overhauled, and searched by its masked members at various times, and, whether found plethoric or poor, having been hospitably entertained as soon as robbed of all they possessed. Only four days before Riggs made his venturesome dash, three discharged soldiers, filled with impatience and whiskey, had sought to run the gauntlet to the camp at Crockett's, and came back, in the robbers' cast-off clothing, to "take on" for another term, having parted with their uniforms and the savings of several years at the solicitation of courteous strangers they met along the route. Nothing but an emergency could have brought Riggs, full tilt, for he was getting along in years and loved the comforts of his army home.

Emergency it was, as he explained to Frazier instantly on his arrival. The general had indubitable information that ranches to the south had long been buying government stores, bacon, feed, flour, coffee, etc. The source of their supply could only be the warehouses at Worth, and Marsden was a "swell" sergeant, whose airs and affluence had made him the object of suspicion. Those were the days when cavalry regiments had a commissary, but Congress did away with the office, and

Winn, whom an indulgent colonel had detailed to that supposedly "soft snap" when regimental head-quarters were stationed at Worth, had been left there with his bulky array of boxes and barrels when the colonel and staff were transferred to a more southern post, the understanding being that he was to turn over everything to Frazier's new quartermaster as soon as that official should arrive. Frazier's appointee, however, was a lieutenant from a distant station. The War Department had not approved the appointment when made. Correspondence had been going on, and only within the week was notification received that the choice was finally confirmed and that Lieutenant Trott would soon arrive. Meantime Winn remained, but the stores were going. Somebody had money enough to bribe the sentries nightly posted at the storehouse at the northern corner of the big rectangle, and wagon-load after wagon-load must have been driven away. Outwardly, as developed by the count made early on the morning following Riggs's coming, all was right, but a veteran cavalry sergeant scoffingly knocked in the heads of cask, box, and barrel, and showed how bacon by the cord had been replaced by rags and boulders, sugar, coffee, and flour by bushels of sand, molasses and vinegar by branch water, and tea and tobacco by trash. "Two to three thousand dollars' worth of rations gone," said Riggs, at noon, "and the devil to pay if Winn cannot." Vain the night ride to Fuller's ranch in search of Marsden. That worthy had long since feathered his portable nest, and on one of the quartermaster's best horses had left the post within the half-hour of Riggs's coming, no man knew for what point after once he crossed the ford. Hoof-tracks by the hundred criss-crossed and zigzagged over the southward mesa. Thick darkness had settled down. Fuller's people swore no signs of him had been seen, and, though patrols kept on all night, poor Winn came back despairing an hour before the dawn to face his fate; even at noon he had hardly begun to realize the extent of his overwhelming loss.

"Go home and try to sleep," said the colonel, sadly, to the dumb and stricken man. "You can do no good here. I'll send the doctor to you."

But Winn started up and shook the old fellow's kindly hand. "I cannot go. My God! I must know the whole business," he cried. "I cannot sleep or eat a morsel."

"Whatever you do, don't drink," said Riggs, in not unkindly warning. "Go and see your wife, anyhow, for an hour or so. She has sent three times." But words were useless. Sympathetic comrades came and strove with him and said empty words of hope or cheer,—empty because they knew poor Winn had not a soul in the world to whom to look for help. Kin to half a dozen old army names, it helped him not a whit, for no one of them was blessed with means beyond the monthly pay, and some had not even that unmortgaged. Twenty-five hundred dollars' shortage already, to say nothing of the cash for recent sales, and more, no doubt, to come. The very thought was ruin. Refusing comfort, the hapless man sat down at his littered desk, stared again at the crowded, dusty pigeon-holes, and saw nothing, nothing but misery, if not despair.

Brayton went over at luncheon-time and begged a word with Mrs. Winn. She peered over the balustrade from the second story, with big, black-rimmed eyes, but could not come down, could not leave baby, who was fretful, she said. Oh, why didn't Mr. Winn come home? What good did it do to stay over there and worry? When would they get through? Brayton couldn't say, but Winn couldn't come,—felt he must stay at the office; but if Mrs. Winn would have some tea and a bite of luncheon prepared, he, Brayton, would gladly take it over. Yet even this friendly office seemed to bring no solace. Winn barely sipped the tea or tasted the savory broth. Frazier and Riggs went out to luncheon, leaving him still seated at his desk; and their faces were black with gloom when they reached the colonel's door. Winn's most distressing plight, following so shortly after the dire misfortune that had happened to Lawrence, would have saddened the whole garrison and tinged all table-talk with melancholy, but for the blessed antidote afforded in Captain Barclay's sudden and most unlooked-for coming.

And what a surprise it was! All one afternoon and part of one evening had Fort Worth been telling that Captain Barclay had refused the assignment to a regiment and post where he must meet Laura Winn; that he had resigned rather than encounter once more the woman who had played him false; that he was too wealthy to care to bury himself in this out-of-the-way hole in Texas anyhow; and even while they were talking, all unheralded, here he was. The major's hospitable doors opened to receive him within ten minutes of his dust-covered advent, and only by hearsay all that night could the garrison know of his presence. One small sole-leather trunk, with the travelling-bag, rifle, field-glasses, canteen, and lunch-box, constituted all the personal luggage of the new arrival. It could not even be said that any one outside of Brooks's had even seen him, so coated with dust were the contents of that old spring wagon when unloaded at the colonel's steps; and many a woman hastened to her door on the following morning, attracted thither by the announcement that Captain Barclay was on the major's porch.

There, with his host, he stood for quite a while, the major pointing out the landmarks along the westward range, and indicating, apparently, other features in the landscape. One or two officers, hastening by, raised their caps or ran up the steps and shook hands with the new-comer, but he was presently summoned in to breakfast, and neighbors could only say he was not very tall, not very stout, not very slight, not very anything. Captain De Lancy, who had had three minutes' conversation, said he "seemed pleasant," but that was all. Mrs. De Lancy was confirmed in her preconceived opinion that men were owls, because her husband was unable to add to the military descriptive list of brown eyes, brown hair, brown beard and clothes, any of the particulars she sought. He couldn't tell whether Barclay had fine teeth or good complexion, what his mouth was like, whether he had nice hands and voice. Indeed, he couldn't see why Mrs. De Lancy should be so anxious to know. Not until towards noon was any reliable particular concerning Captain Barclay passed along the

line. Then the domestic bulletin dealt out the fact that the millionaire mine-owner wore a flannel shirt and a silver watch, which information was distinctly disheartening.

But that evening, while the colonel and other officers began calling at Brooks's to welcome formally the unexpected addition to the commissioned force, Mrs. Brooks was able to slip out and over to her crony Mrs. De Lancy, and in ten minutes she had an audience, married and single, that gladdened her heart. She could and did talk almost uninterruptedly for over an hour. Arriving dames or damsels were signalled not to interrupt, and, joining the circle, patiently withheld their questions until she paused for breath; and then what every one seemed to want to know was, had he said anything or asked anything about Mrs. Winn? He had. He expressed the utmost sympathy with poor Mr. Winn. He told Major Brooks of a similar experience that occurred in the —d Cavalry only the year previous, and how it would probably take the defrauded officer years to square the account. He most delicately inquired as to the general health and well-being of Mrs. Winn, whom he had had the pleasure, he said, of meeting several years before; but more particularly he had asked about Lawrence, and Lawrence's children, and who was in charge of them; it was evident that he was deeply concerned about them and most anxious to meet Captain and Mrs. Blythe.

"Well, that's one thing at least in his favor," was the verdict; for throughout Brooks's battalion, as it was then called, or squadron, as we should call it to-day, there existed an indefinable feeling of antagonism towards this stranger within their gates, thus coming to usurp the place Ned Lawrence held in their hearts and homes, if no longer on their rolls. Some one slipped out and brought in Mrs. Blythe, for whose benefit Mrs. Brooks not unwillingly went over all she had told about Captain Barclay's queries as to the children and their benefactors; and that sweet, tender-hearted, motherly woman ought to have softened to him, but didn't. "He could have heard it all at San Antonio for the asking," she declared. "But he didn't stop two days at San Antonio," explained Mrs. Brooks. "The moment he heard that Colonel Riggs was going on by special ambulance he begged to be allowed to go with him, and Riggs couldn't see a way to say no, and later confessed he was very glad he had said yes."

"Brooks, you were all growling at the idea of having any outsider, much less a doughboy, take Lawrence's place," were the bluff old veteran's exact words; "but you mark what I say. I was rather prejudiced against this young fellow myself, and it has just taken this jolt together from San Antonio to satisfy me he is grit to the backbone, and you are in big luck to get him."

At least a dozen men called at the major's that evening to pay their respects to the new comrade. It was long after taps when the last one left, but, almost to a man, they gathered at the club-room later to compare notes. Hodge, of course, had called among the first, his claim of intimate or at least old acquaintance rendering it necessary. Barclay's brown eyes certainly lighted at the sight of the face he had known in the far northwest; he chatted for a moment with the in-

fantryman, and expressed his pleasure at meeting him again. Then Blythe entered, with his grave, massive face and courteous yet reserved manner; and Brooks spoke of the fact that Barclay seemed to shake hands more earnestly with him than with any of the others, and to look at him oftener, though striving to slight no one. They sat there, as men will at such times, somewhat awkwardly, only one speaking at once, and generally the same one. Hodge, for instance, had much to say and many questions to ask about fellows he had known in Wyoming, and when he left and others came in, three or four went at the same time, having sat stolid listeners, calmly studying Barclay with their eyes and finally saying good-night, and "hope to see you when you get settled," etc.

They were talking of him at the store, and wondering when and where he would settle, and whether he would take Lawrence's quarters, and what would then become of Ada and little Jim, who with old Mammy still occupied their rooms there and had all the furniture as poor daddy left it, but who went over to the Blythes' three times a day to take their rations with their army chums and playmates the little Blythes. "What a godsend it would be if he would buy poor Ned's books and furniture!" said De Lancy. "It would yield enough to send those poor babies home."

"Home," said Blythe, sadly: "what home has a child whose kith and kin are all of the army? They have neither home nor mother."

But no man made the faintest comment on facts the women remarked instanter, that Barclay's watch was only silver and his guard an inexpensive little cord or braid of fine leather, worn about his neck; that his travelling suit was of rough gray mixture, and his shirt a flannel *négligée*. But then, as Mrs. De Lancy explained in extenuation of their blindness, he had donned his uniform by the time they called that second evening, and it became him very well.

CHAPTER V.

A WEEK went rapidly by. Captain Barclay had gone on duty, and Mr. Brayton, his sub, had not yet "sized him up." Lieutenant Trott, the new regimental quartermaster, had arrived by the Saturday's stage, and was ready to receipt to Lieutenant Winn for all property he had to turn over; but Winn had broken down under his weight of woe and taken to his bed. From Washington came tidings, telegraphed as far as San Antonio, that Lawrence was slowly mending and would soon be sitting up. Mrs. Winn, absorbed in the care of her suffering husband, had accepted no invitations, but the many sympathetic women who called to ask if there were not some way in which they could be of aid reported her as looking feverish and far from well. Some of them had ventured to speak of the new arrival, and, though her ears were evidently open, her lips were closed. That she was willing, if not eager, to hear anything they had to say or tell about Captain Barclay was all very well as far as it went, but what some of her visitors most desired

was to hear what she had to say about him; as she would say nothing, one or two had resorted to a little delicate questioning in the hope of drawing her out. Mrs. Faulkner, a young matron of her own age and previous social standing, an army girl like herself, and for some time her one intimate friend at Worth, went so far as to ask, "You used to know him very well, did you not?" and was checkmated by the answer, "Not well enough to talk about," which answer Mrs. Faulkner pondered over and considered deliberately and inexcusably rude. With the kindest feeling for her in the world, as all the women avowed, and no animosity whatever towards Barclay over and beyond that feeling on poor Colonel Lawrence's account, there was the liveliest interest at Worth as regarded Mrs. Winn and Captain Barclay in seeing what they would do; and, to the disappointment of all Fort Worth, they had done nothing.

Barclay promptly returned the calls of the officers who had called upon him, and had done all proper homage to the wives of those who were possessed of such blessings, but there were still certain quarters where his face or his card had not been seen: at Captain Cram's, for instance, because that warrior was on scout and couldn't call, ditto his lieutenant; at one or two of the new and unpolished pillars of the temple, because they had not known enough or had been too shy to call; and at Winn's, because that officer was ill of a fever and could not call. There was another set of quarters in which he had not yet set foot,—Ned Lawrence's; and that was the house most people expected him to visit first.

Nor did he remain at Brooks's. The major's house was big, but so was his household. "You have a vacant room here, Mr. Brayton," he said, the third day after his arrival, as he dropped in at his subaltern's. "It may be a month before I get shaken down into place. I dislike to disturb women and children, and so have decided to ask you to let me move my cot and trunk in here awhile and to propose my name at the mess." And Brayton, blushing at the realization of the fact that the furniture in the room referred to consisted solely of some chairs, a square pine table covered with a cavalry blanket, with a cigar-box half full of smoking-tobacco, another half full of white beans, and a pack of cards for its sole ornaments, nevertheless bravely ushered his new captain into the bower, and Barclay looked neither surprised nor satirical at the sight. "We sometimes play a mild game of draw here, sir," said downright Brayton, "which accounts for the appearance of things; but my striker can clean it up in ten minutes, and you are most welcome."

"It won't put you out in any way?" asked Barclay, without the comment of an uplifted eyebrow on the evidence adduced.

"Not so much as poker, if it does at all," said Brayton, promptly. He was determined his captain should know the extent of his frailties at the start.

Barclay smiled quietly and turned to the boy with liking in his eye. "I'm hardly ten years your senior, Brayton," said he, "and so shall not preach, but I believe we can put that room to a little better use."

The next day he took his seat at the bachelors' mess, where a dozen officers were congregated, all of them but two his juniors in rank. The sideboard was lavishly decked with the indispensables of that benighted day. The old-timers and the new took their anteprandial cocktail or toddy, and hospitably invited Barclay to join. Barclay smiled gratefully, but said he had "never yet got in the way of it, somehow," nor did he more than sip at the Bordeaux which the presiding officer ordered served in honor of the occasion. The mess was rather silent. Most men seemed desirous of listening to Barclay when he spoke at all. They knew every twist and turn of each other's mode of speech by that time, and could repeat verbatim every story in the combination. Barclay might have something new; but if he did he had no chance. Captain Follansbee took and kept the floor from first to last. He was airing his views on the subject of consolidation, reorganization, and purification as practised at the War Department, a topic which the others considered inexcusable, not so much from the fact that it must be most unpalatable to Captain Barclay, a beneficiary of the business, as it turned out, as because Follansbee had worn them all out with it weeks before.

And, to everybody's surprise, so far from seeming annoyed or embarrassed or bored, Barclay led him on from point to point, and, even after coffee was served, sat an apparently absorbed listener, for by that time Follansbee had absorbed most of the claret and was dilating on the matter with especial reference to the case of Colonel Lawrence. Later that evening Barclay spent an hour at the Blythes', and two days after he and Brayton dined there.

It was a seven-o'clock dinner. The doctor and his wife, Major and Mrs. Brooks, Miss Frazier and Miss Amanda Frazier, were the other guests. Those were the days when officers of all grades wore epaulets when in full uniform, but, except in one or two swell messes, full dress was not considered requisite for either dinner or hops. The men wore the uniform frock-coat with shoulder-straps; some few privileged characters even dared to appear in a sack-coat with white tie. Such a thing as the evening dress of civil life was unknown at a military post, and unowned in the fighting force of the army, outside, perhaps, of the artillery. The doctor was a privileged character, a man who said what he thought and did what he thought right; and when Mrs. Blythe, glancing out of her parlor window, saw their favored friend and medical adviser coming along the walk, his hands deep in his trousers-pockets and himself in a fit of abstraction and a new sack-coat, while the partner of his joys and sorrows chatted briskly with the Frazier girls, Mrs. Blythe called up-stairs to her massive liege lord, "Wear your blouse, dear; the doctor has on his;" whereupon Blythe slipped out of the uniform coat of formal cut and into the easy sack, and came trotting down the creaking stair in time to welcome his guests. Brooks, Barclay, and Brayton, who came later, were in the prescribed regulation dress, whereat Dr. Collabone exclaimed, "Hullo! Now that's what I ought to have done, if I'd had as much regard for conventionality as I have for health. Gentlemen, do you know you simply invite an apoplectic seizure by sitting down to dinner in a tightly buttoned

uniform coat? It is barbarous. There ought to be a regulation against it."

It was observed that while the doctor included all three of the cavalrymen in his remarks he looked at and apparently addressed only one, Captain Barclay, whose uniform coat was brand-new, very handsomely cut, its buttons and shoulder-straps of the finest make and finish, whereas the doctor's were tarnished, if not actually shabby. Brooks frowned, and Brayton looked embarrassed lest Barclay should take it amiss; but that officer remained smilingly interested, and in no wise troubled. The Frazier girls giggled, and Miss Amanda was prompt to assert that for her part she loved to see the officers wear the proper uniform, and she wasn't alarmed about apoplexy; whereupon Collabone smiled benignly and said, "What did I tell you about the danger of tight lacing?" Amanda couldn't bear the doctor. Her elder and primmer sister only half liked him. Many of the women thought him brusque and rude, but officers and men and mothers of families swore by him, and children adored him. A childless man himself, he seemed to keep open house for the offspring of his comrades. They swarmed about his quarters at all hours of the day. They invaded his parlor, overflowed his dining-room, and ruled his kitchen.

A kindly and placid soul was Mrs. Collabone, a woman who had few cares or perplexities, and these she promptly turned over to her broad-minded, broad-shouldered liege for final disposition, as serenely confident of their speedy dissipation as she was of the prompt conquest of any and all the manifold ills to which childish flesh is heir by that practitioner's infallible remedies. Children ran loose in those days in Texas; and so they ought to, said Collabone. "Savage races are the only scientific rearers," he maintained. "Boys or girls, they should be burdened with but a single garment, or less, from the time they're born until they're eight or ten, and meantime they should be made to eat, sleep, and live out-doors." He preached for children regularity in matters of diet, prescribed four light meals a day, practised heterodoxy, and distributed bread and milk, bread and syrup, bread and jam, cookies, corn dodgers, and molasses candy, morning, noon, and night. Aunt Purlina, the fat and jocund goddess of the Collabones' kitchen, had standing orders on such subjects, and many a time had the post surgeon to wait for his own refreshments because "the kids" had possession of the premises. There was never a worry along officers' row when children strayed from home. "Oh, they're over at the doctor's," was the soothing response to all queries. The doctor's big yard was the garrison playground; for, when a soulless, heartless, childless, wifeless post commander, Frazier's predecessor, had dared to prohibit the use of the parade-ground for croquet, hop-scotch, marbles, or "Tom, Tom Pull-away," it was Collabone who rigged up swings and giant strides at his own expense and without the aid of the post quartermaster, and sent away to New Orleans for croquet sets for the exclusive use of the youngsters. It nettled inexpressibly the field officer commanding. He took it as a rebuke from his junior, and took it out in a course of nagging and persecution at the doctor's expense, that roused the energies of the entire post. Frazier was sent from Concho to supersede

the objectionable lieutenant-colonel, who thereupon declared his intention of moving the doctor out and taking his quarters; but a courier galloped all the way from Worth to the camp at San Patricio, whither the department commander had gone a-hunting, and another got back in the nick of time with orders for the devastating officer to move to the cantonment on the Pecos, the worst hole in all Texas, as reported by the department inspector. The children had won the day.

At the very moment when the party took their seats at Blythe's, the children of that establishment and their friends the Lawrences were holding high carnival at the doctor's, Aunt Purlina and the colored maid vying with each other in efforts to stuff them to repletion. Over this uproarious feast presided the tall slip of a damsel with whom poor Ned had parted so mournfully when he went away in February. Ada's was the only face in all the merry party that seemed to have known a trace of sorrow. Her big, dark, mournful eyes and shaggy hair, her sallow face and shabby frock, twice let down and still "skimpy," told a pathetic story. Thirteen years of age, the child had already seen much of anxiety and trouble,—much, indeed, beyond the ken of many an elder; and the week going by brought hour after hour of nervous wear and tear, the cause of which only one woman knew, and strove in vain to banish. Ada shrank with actual dread and repulsion from the thought of having to meet the man who had come to take her loved father's place.

Thrice had Barclay spoken to Mrs. Blythe of a desire to see the children of Colonel Lawrence; now he felt confident that he knew the cause of her evasion, and pressed no more. But all through dinner, even while speaking in the low, somewhat measured tones habitual to him, he lost no talk in which the children were mentioned; and at Blythe's they were never forgotten. It was not long before he discovered that the Blythes and Lawrences—the young people—were at the doctor's, Ada presiding. Indeed, with much gusto, almost as soon as soup was served, Collabone began telling of her matronly, motherly ways. Half an hour later a messenger came to the door and asked if Dr. Collabone would please step over and see Mrs. De Lancy a moment. "Tell her I'll be there in just one hour," said the doctor, looking at his watch. Then he added, for the benefit of the party present, "There's nothing in the world the matter with Mrs. De Lancy, and by that time she'll have forgotten she sent for me." Ten minutes later came another call. It was the Collabones' domestic this time. "Little Jimmy's cut his hand, and Miss Ada can't stop the bleeding." "Say I'll come instantly," said he, springing from the table and making his excuses to the lady of the house.

Barclay's face shone with instant sympathy and interest. Dessert was nearly over. He turned to the motherly woman whose own gentle face betrayed her anxiety.

"Will you think me very rude?" he said. "You know I do not smoke, and I do want so much to meet those children. I feel that Ada purposely shuns me, and this is an opportunity not to be lost. May I be excused? I will soon return." Mrs. Blythe's eyes were eloquent as she bade him go.

Three minutes later he softly entered the doctor's sitting-room. There in a big easy-chair sat a tall, sallow-faced, tumbled-haired girl, holding in her arms a burly little fellow whose frightened sobbings she had at last controlled, and who, with only an occasional whimper, was now submitting to the doctor's examination and deriving much comfort from his professional and reassuring manner.

"Why, this is no cut at all, Jimmy, my boy. The reason you bled so much is that you are so uncommonly healthy and full of blood. This won't keep you out of mischief six hours. Hold the basin steady, Purlina. Kick all you want to, Jimmy. Don't you dare to laugh, Kittie Blythe. Well, if here isn't Captain Barclay too come in to see you! Here is the little wounded soldier, captain. You had your arm in a sling six long months, didn't you? The Sioux did that for him, Jimmy, and you've only got to be done up in a bandage till to-morrow night. Let Captain Barclay hold you? Indeed I won't. He doesn't know how to hold little boys—like Ada. He's got no little boys, nor big Ada either. Bet your boots he wishes he had, Jimmy." Thus the doctor chatted as he bathed and bandaged the pudgy little fist, while Jimmy lay, half relieved at the rapid termination to his woes, half resentful they should be declared so trifling, and, with eyes much swollen with weeping, critically studied the new captain's appearance and gave token of modified approval. But Ada's white lids and long dark lashes were never once uplifted.

Presently Collabone pronounced everything doing finely, and said he'd go and see Mrs. De Lancy. "You tell them there's nothing much the matter, will you?" he said to Barclay.

"I will—when I get there," was the smiling reply; "but I'm going to tell this little fellow a story first about a Sioux baby boy I knew in Wyoming, and his playmate, a baby bear." And, with wondering, wide-open eyes upon him, Barclay seated himself close to Ada's chair, while the doctor stole silently away.

Half an hour later, when he returned, a circle of absorbed listeners was gazing into Barclay's face. Ada only sat apart, and little Jimmy's curly head was pillowed on the story-teller's breast.

CHAPTER VI.

Ten days passed. Barclay had become an institution at Fort Worth, yet opinions were as divided and talk of him as constant as before he came. First and foremost, he had met Mrs. Winn, and his demeanor on that presumably trying occasion had proved a distinct disappointment. Winn was recovering health, if not spirits. A stage-load of officers and ladies had come from the cantonment to spend forty-eight hours, and a big dance was prescribed for their benefit. Mrs. Winn danced divinely, and never looked so well as when with a suitable partner on a suitable floor. Those were the days when we raved over the "Mabel," the "Guards," the "Maude," and the "Hilda" waltzes, Godfrey's melodious creations,—when the galop and

trois temps were going out, and we "Boston dipped" to every tune from Pat Malloy to Five O'Clock in the Morning, and the Worth orchestra was a good one when the first violin wasn't drunk, a condition which had to be provided against with assiduous care. The party arrived during one of his lucid intervals, and the adjutant promptly placed the artist under bonds to shun the cup until after the guests had gone; then he could fill up to his heart's content and no fear of a fine. Winn couldn't attend, but Laura was looking wan and sallow. She needed air and exercise, and her husband urged her to accept Mr. Brayton's escort and go; so did Collabone; so did her own inclination. Superbly gowned and coiffed and otherwise decorated, she went, and her entrance was the sensation of the evening. It was long after ten when she appeared. The hop was in full blast; the big room, gayly decorated, was throbbing with the rhythmic movement of the closing figure of the Lancers. Almost everybody was on the floor, for energetic were our dancers in those by-gone days. Just as the music came to full stop, and with joyous laughter and merry words of parting the sets broke up, the women and girls, middle-aged or young (they never grow old in the army), clinging to their partners' arms, fanning, possibly, their flushed faces, were escorted to their seats, and the floor like magic was cleared for the coming waltz. The group at the flag-draped entrance parted right and left, making way for a young officer in cavalry uniform at whom nobody so much as glanced, because of the tall and radiant woman at his side, on whom all eyes were centred. "Look at Laura Winn," was the whisper that flew from womanly lip to lip. "Isn't she simply superb?" "Look at Mrs. Winn," muttered many a man, his eyes lighting at the sight. "Isn't she just stunning?"

And then people began to hunt for Barclay.

He was standing at the moment talking quietly with Mrs. Frazier, who was making much of the young captain now, and was accused of having hopes of him on account of her eldest darling, who had dined by his side three different times at three different houses during the week, and was therefore said to be "receiving considerable attention." But the hush of laughter and miscellaneous chatter almost instantly attracted the matron's attention. She glanced at the door, gasped involuntarily, and then as suddenly turned and narrowly watched him, for he too noted the lull in conversation, and, slowly facing the doorway, saw before him not ten paces away the woman who was to have been his wife, gazing straight at him as though challenging him to look and be blinded, as blinded by her beauty he had been before. She was only a young, immature, untaught girl then, ignorant of her powers. Now the soft bloom was gone, but in its place there lurked among the tiny threads of lines or wrinkles just forming at the corners of her brilliant eyes, and in the witching curves about her mobile, sensitive, exquisite lips, a charm beside which her virgin graces were cold and formal. She had been what all men called a wonderfully pretty girl. She was now what many women termed a dangerously beautiful woman, and she knew it well. When we had no one especially selected to "receive" in those days, it was a sort of garrison custom

for everybody to present himself or herself to the wife of the commanding officer, in case that official was so provided. Mrs. Frazier was seated in plain view of the queenly creature who, having advanced a few steps beyond the portals and the loiterers there assembled, now halted, and like some finished actress swept the room with her radiant eyes, as though compelling all men, all women, to yield to her their attention and regard, and then, smiling brightly, beamingly (dutiful Brayton guided by the pressure of her daintily gloved hand), moved with almost royal grace and deliberation to where Mrs. Frazier sat in state; and the first lady of the garrison rose to greet her.

Unsuitable as is the full uniform for cavalry purposes to-day, it was worse in 1870, when our shoulders were decked with wabbly epaulets and our waists were draped with a silken sash that few men wore properly. But whatever might be said of Sir Galahad's shortcomings as a boon companion, or of his severely simple and economical mode of life, there was no manifestation of parsimony in his attire. No man in the room was so well uniformed, or wore the garb of his profession with better grace. He who came in a flannel shirt and a rough gray suit, with a silver watch and leather watch-chain, appeared this night in uniform of faultless cut and fit, with brand-new glittering captain's epaulets, while his sash was of the costliest silk net, of a brighter red than generally worn,—most officers appearing in a stringy affair that age and weather had turned to dingy purple. On his left breast Barclay wore the badge in gold and enamel of a famous fighting division in a gallant corps; and such badges were rare in the days whereof I write. Moreover, though neither a tall man nor a stalwart, Captain Barclay was erect, wiry, and well proportioned, and his head and face were well worth the second look every one had been giving this night. "The Twelfth have been swearing like pirates at having another doughboy saddled on 'em," chuckled Captain Perkins, himself a doughboy. "Begad, the Twelfth has no better picture of the officer and the gentleman than this importation from the Foot." But no one spoke with the thought of being heard as Laura Winn finished her greeting to Mrs. Frazier. Every man and woman was intent only on what was coming next, although many strove to speak, or to appear to listen, to their neighbors. Charlotte Frazier actually rose from her seat and stepped out into the room that she might have a better view.

And Barclay would not have been the observant man he had already shown himself to be had he not known it. His color was a bit high for one whose face was ordinarily so pale, but he stood calmly erect, with an expression of pleased contemplation in his fine eyes, waiting for Mrs. Winn to finish the somewhat hurried yet lavish words that she addressed to Mrs. Frazier; then she turned effusively upon him.

"Captain Barclay!" she exclaimed. "How very good to see you here! and how glad we all are to welcome you to the Twelfth! Mr. Winn and I have been in despair because his illness has kept him a prisoner. Indeed, I doubt if I should have left him at all to-night but for his positive orders—and the doctor's; then, of course, I much wanted to see you—too."

She had begun confidently, even masterfully. She looked him with

determined effort straight in the face at the start, but her confidence flitted before a dozen words were said. Her voice faltered before she had half finished, for Barclay's eyes frankly, even smilingly, met hers, and with ease and dignity and courteous interest all commingled he had bowed slightly over her hand, lowered it after a brief, by no means lingering, pressure, and stood, merely mentioning her name, "Mrs. Winn," and, as was rather a way of his, letting the other party do all the talking. It was a godsend to Laura Winn that the waltz music began at the next instant, for his nonchalance was something utterly unexpected. Oh, how dared he look so calmly, indifferently, forgetfully, almost unrecognizingly, into her eyes, and stand there so placidly, when her heart was fluttering wildly with nervous excitement, her words coming in gasps!

"Oh, Mr. Brayton, how heavenly!" she exclaimed. "Don't let us lose an instant of that waltz." Over his glittering shoulder she beamed in parting a bewitching smile, levelled all at Barclay, and glided away, a floating cloud of filmy drapery, a vision of flashing eyes, of flushing cheeks, of dazzling white teeth gleaming between the parted rose-leaves of her mouth, of snowy shoulders and shapely arms, of peeping, pointed, satin-shod feet, the handsomest creature in all that crowded room, and the most dismally unhappy. She had met him in the witnessing presence of all Fort Worth, and all the garrison saw that she had sustained a crushing defeat. She who was to have been his wife and had duped him, she who had looked to subjugate him once more, was duped in turn, the victim of her own vanity.

"And to think," said Mrs. De Lancy, "she only changed her half-mourning a month ago, and now—in full ball costume!"

Fort Worth didn't stop talking of that episode for all of another week, and that, too, in the face of other interesting matter.

To begin with, Sergeant Marsden had disappeared as though from the face of the earth. Whither he had fled no man could say. No settlement worth the name had not been searched, no ranch remained unvisited. Fuller's people would not shield the fugitive, for Fuller, as the post sutler, suffered equally with Uncle Sam from the sergeant's depredations. Settlers and ranch people who bought of the latter cut into the business of the former, and Fuller would most gladly have had him "rounded up" long weeks ago; but Marsden and his few confederates in the garrison had admirably covered their tracks, and the indications of declining trade that had roused the sutler's suspicions led to no arousal of vigilance within the sentry line: wherefore Fuller's heart was hardened against the post commander and the erstwhile commissary, and this, too, at a time when the latter stood in sorest need of financial help. The extent of poor Winn's losses and responsibility was now known: so far as his commissary accounts were concerned, not a cent less than three thousand dollars would cover them. The quartermaster was out a horse and equipments, and several confiding enlisted men and laundresses were defrauded of money loaned the dashing sergeant. Uncle Sam, be it known, has summary methods as a bill-collector. He simply stops his servant's pay until the amount

due is fully met. Winn's total pay and emoluments as computed in '70 and '71 would barely serve in two years to square himself with his exacting Uncle. Meantime, what were wife and baby and other claimants to do? What was he to live on, and so insure payment of which his death would destroy all possibility? Crushed as Winn was, there were men and women who roundly scored his wife for appearing superbly dressed at the first ball graced by the presence of her discarded lover. Yet had she stayed away, their disappointment would have exceeded this disapprobation. Collabone said his patient suffered from a low fever, which the unprofessional found difficult to understand, in view of Mrs. Winn's diagnosis, which declared it alarmingly high. Certain it is that he kept his room until four days after the evening of the ball; then he had to turn out and face the music, for orders came from "San Antone."

Then, too, came another invoice of interesting matter to Fort Worth, and it must be remembered that, in the narrow and restricted life of the far frontier, interest existed in matters that seem too trivial for mention in the broader spheres of the metropolis. The invoice was an actual and material fact, and consisted of a big wagon-load of household goods consigned to Captain Barclay, accompanied by a dignified Ethiopian and two very knowing-looking horses that had many of the points of thoroughbreds. The quartermaster's train under proper escort had made the long pull from Department Head-Quarters, and all unannounced came these chattels to the new troop leader. The very next morning, which was a Sunday, when Brooks's four troops formed line for inspection in the old-fashioned full dress of the cavalry, the men in shell jackets and plumed felt hats, the officers in long-skirted, clerical-looking frock-coats, black ostrich plumes, gold epaulets, and crimson sashes, there rode at the head of Lawrence's old troop a new captain, whose horse and equipments became the centre of critical and admiring eyes the moment it was possible for his comrades to leave their commands and gather about him. Very few officers in those days possessed anything better than the regulation troop bridle and raw-hide McClellan saddle, which with their folded blankets satisfied all the modest requirements of the frontier. The light-batterymen indulged in a little more style and had picturesque red blankets to help out, but even they were put in the shade, and came trotting over during the rest after Brooks had made the formal ride round to look at the general appearance of his command. All hands seemed to gather in approbation about Barclay's charger. The horse himself was a bright, blooded bay, with jet-black, waving mane, tail, and forelock, superb head, shoulders and haunches, and nimble legs, all handsomely set off by a glistening bridle with double rein, martingale, glossy breast-strap and polished bits, curb-chain, bosses, rings, and heart, with the regimental number in silver on the bosses and at the corner of the handsome shabraque of dark blue cloth, patent leather, and the yellow edging and trimming of the cavalry. "The only outfit of the kind at Worth," said Brooks, emphatically. "And yet, gentlemen," he continued, seeing latent criticism in the eyes of certain of the circle, "it's all strictly in accordance with regulations, and just as we used to have it in the old days before the

war. I wish we all had the same now. I haven't seen a Grimsley outfit since '61."

"Grimsley it is," said the veteran captain of the light battery. "Mine went to Richmond in '61 with what we didn't save of our battery at First Bull Run."

"Grimsley it is," said his junior subaltern. "If Sam Waring could only see that, he'd turn green with envy to-day and borrow it to-morrow." Whereat there went up a laugh, for Waring was a man of mark in the queer old days of the army.

Then of course every one wanted to know, as the cavalcade rode from the drill-ground up to the post, where Barclay had bought his horses, and some inquired how much they cost; and to all queries of the kind Barclay answered, with perfect good humor, that he had ordered the equipments of the old firm of Grimsley, still doing business in St. Louis, as it did in the days when Jefferson Barracks and Leavenworth and Riley were famous cavalry stations in the '50s; the horses he had bought of a family connection in Kentucky, and had given seven hundred dollars for the pair.

"See here, Hodge," growled the old stagers as they clustered about the club-room, sipping cooling drinks after the warm morning exercise, "what's all this you've been telling us about Barclay's inexpensive, economical, and skimpy ways? He's got the outfit of a British field-marshal, by gad!"

But Hodge was too much concerned and confounded to speak. "It's more'n I can explain," he said. "Why, he wouldn't spend ten cents in Wyoming."

And yet, had Hodge only known it, Barclay's infantry outfit was of just as fine finish and material, as far as it went, as these much more costly and elaborate appointments of the mounted service. Everything connected with the dress or equipments of his profession Barclay, who would spend nothing for frivolities, ordered of the best furnishers, and no man ever appeared on duty in uniform more precise or equipments of better make.

Of course the club-room was not the only place where Barclay's really bewildering appearance was discussed. Among the officers there were many who growled and criticised. It was all right to have handsome horses, if he could afford it: any cavalryman would try to do that, was the verdict. "But all these other jimcracks, they're simply moonshine!" And yet, as pointed out by Major Brooks, it was all strictly according to regulation. "Damn the regulations!" said Captain Follansbee; "they're too expensive for me." And, take it all in all, the feeling of the mess was rather against than with Barclay; he had no business wearing better clothes or using better horse-furniture than did his fellows. Follansbee went so far as to tackle Blythe on the subject and invoke his sympathy, but that massive old dragoon disappointed him. "Barclay's right," said he; "and if the rules were enforced we'd all have to get them."

"But they cost so much," said Follansbee.

"Not half what you spend in whiskey in half the time it would take to get them here," was the unfeeling rejoinder.

Mrs. Frazier and Mrs. De Lancy, however, wished the captain had brought an easy open carriage with driving horses instead of saddlers. It would have been far more useful, said those level-headed women. And so it might have been—to them.

But in the midst of all the talk and discussion came tidings that amazed Fort Worth. Ned Lawrence was actually on his way back to Texas,—would be with his precious babies within the fortnight,—would reoccupy his old quarters for a while at least as the guest of the usurper, for they had been formally chosen by Captain Barclay, to the frantic wrath of Ada when first she heard the news,—wrath that sobbed itself out in the lap of her loving friend Mrs. Blythe, as the motherless girl listened with astonished ears to the explanation.

"So far from raging at him, Ada, you should be thankful that your dear father and you and Jimmy have found so thoughtful and generous a friend as Captain Barclay. If he had not chosen your house, Captain Bronson would have done so, and you would have had to go. As it is, nothing of yours or your father's will be disturbed."

And sorely tempted was the enthusiastic, tender-hearted woman to tell much more that, but for his prohibition, she would have told; and yet she did not begin to know all.

CHAPTER VII.

WITHIN the fortnight came poor Ned Lawrence back to Worth, and men who rode far out on the Crockett trail to meet the stage marvelled at the change three months had made in him. He had grown ten years older, and was wrinkled and gray. Winn was of the party, and Winn, who a month gone by was looking haggard, nervous, miserable, now rode buoyantly, with almost hopeful eyes and certainly better color than he had had for months, despite the fact that he had lost both flesh and color during his illness. Something had happened to lighten his load of dread and care. Something must have happened to enable Lawrence to take that long, long journey back to Texas. Fort Worth indulged in all manner of theories as to where the money was coming from, and Barclay, of course, was suspected, even interrogated. The frankest man in some respects that ever lived, Captain Galbraith Barclay was reticent as a clam when he saw fit to keep silent, and men found it useless to question or women to hint. As for Winn, he had but one classmate at the post, Brayton, who had never been one of his intimates at the Point, and, being rather, as was said, of the "high and mighty," reserved and distant sort with the subalterns he found at Worth on joining three winters before, Winn had never been popular. Lawrence was his one intimate, despite the disparity in years. And so no man ventured to ask by what means he expected to meet the demands thus made upon him. The board of survey ordered to determine the amount of the loss and fix the responsibility had no alternative. Winn and his few friends made a hard fight, setting forth the facts that the count had been made every month as required by orders

and regulations, and that except by bursting open every bale, box, and barrel, and sifting over the contents, it would have been impossible to detect Marsden's methods. On some things the board was disposed to dare regulations and raps on the knuckles, and to let Winn off on several others; but what was the use? "the proceedings would only be sent back for reconsideration," said their president; and as it transpired that Winn had not exercised due vigilance, but had trusted almost entirely to his sergeant, they decided to cut the Gordian knot by saddling the young officer with the entire responsibility, which meant, sooner or later, a stoppage of nearly three thousand dollars of his pay.

It is a sad yet time-honored commentary at the expense of human nature that the contemplation of the misfortunes of our fellow-men is not always a source of unalloyed sorrow. There was genuine and general sympathy for Lawrence, because he had been poor and pinched and humbled for years, had worn shabby clothes, and had sought all possible field duty, where "deeds, not duds," as a garrison wit expressed it, seemed to make the man. He had frankly spoken of his straits and worries to such as spoke to him in friendship, and this, with his deep and tender love for his children, and his capital record as a scout leader, had won over to him all the men who at one time were envious and jealous and had cherished the linesman's prejudice against the fellow whose duties for years had kept him on the staff. The women were all with him, and that meant far more than may seem possible outside the army. There was many a gentle dame in the old days of adobe barracks who could be an Artemisia in the cause of a friend.

No one knew just what object Ned Lawrence had in coming back to Dixie. Every one knew he had indignantly refused the second lieutenancy, despite the fact that one or two men with war service and rank almost equal to his own had meekly accepted the grudgingly tendered commission, and others were said to be about to follow suit, —all, presumably, with the hope that their friends and representatives in Congress assembled would speedily legislate them back where they thought they belonged. No one knew where Ned Lawrence had made a raise of money, but raise he certainly had made, for, to Blythe's indignation, there came a draft of one hundred dollars to cover the expenses, he said, of his children and old Mammy and to pay the latter some of her wages. The balance he would settle, he wrote, when he arrived. Blythe would far rather he had waited until his accounts were adjusted; then, if Lawrence were in funds, Blythe could have found no fault with this insistence on at least partially defraying the expenses incurred in providing for the little household. Lawrence hoped to have his accounts adjusted, his letter said, and he had reason to believe, from what friends in Washington told him, that he would find his successor willing to receipt to him for missing items, trusting to luck and the flotsam and jetsam of the frontier to replace them in course of time. Lawrence, indeed, was curious now to meet and know Captain Barclay, for he had been told many things that had gone far to remove the feeling of unreasoning antagonism he had felt at first.

Only one thing did he say to Blythe that threw light on his future plans. "I am dreadfully sorry," he wrote, "to hear such ill tidings

about Harry Winn. I was always fearful there was something wrong about that fellow Marsden, and sometimes strove to caution him,—I, who could not see the beam in my own eye,—I, with two scoundrels in my orderly-room, trying to warn him against the one in his! Winn is a proud, sensitive, self-centred sort of fellow, whom wealth perhaps might have made popular. He is no better manager than I. He has a wife who could never help him to live within his means, as poor Kitty certainly tried to do with me." (Oh, the blessed touch of Time! Oh, the sweet absolution of Death! Kitty was an angel now, and her ways and means were buried with all that was mortal of her.) "And, worse than all, poor Hal has no one, I fear, to help him now, as—I write it with blinded eyes, dear Blythe—it has pleased God I should find in many friends in the days of my sore adversity,—you and your blessed wife, and the colonel, and Brooks,—even rough old Follansbee and our dilettante De Lancy, and that inimitable Collabone. My heart overflows, and my eyes, too, at thought of all you and they have done and said and written for me and mine. And here, too, where in my bitterness I thought I was deserted of all, here is gallant old Front de Bœuf (you remember how we swore by him in the Valley after Davy Russell was killed). He has housed and fed and nursed and cared for me like a brother, and Senator Howe and even old Catnip—God bless him!—have worked hard for me; and, though my soldier days seem over for the time at least, my stubborn spirit has had to surrender to such counsellors and friends as they have been to me. They all say Congress will surely put me back next winter, and meantime 'Buffstick' says I'm to have a salaried position in a big company with which he is associated, and to begin work as soon as my health is re-established and my accounts straightened out."

"Who is Buffstick?" queried Mrs. Blythe, at this juncture.

"Buffstick? Oh, that was our pet name for Colonel Dalton, of the —th Massachusetts, Lawrence's friend and host in Washington; a magnificent fellow, dear, with a head and chest that made some lover of Scott liken him to Front de Bœuf,—out of 'Ivanhoe,' you know. But he was a stickler for neatness in dress and equipments, and his regiment called him Buffstick, and grew to love him all the same. He commanded a brigade after Cedar Creek, and now,—just think of it!—he's a capitalist."

"Does he know Captain Barclay, do you think?" she asked, after a reflective pause.

"I'm sure I don't know. Probably not," was the answer. "They never served in the same part of the army. Why do you ask?"

"Oh, I was wishing—I couldn't help thinking—how much Mr. Winn needed some good friend, too."

"Winn and Lawrence are very different men," said Blythe, gravely. "Lawrence has made friends, while poor Winn has only enemies, I fear, and, really, none worse than himself."

Mrs. Blythe sighed as she turned away. It was much as her husband said. The Winns had come to the regiment after a round of receptions, dinners, and dances in their honor all the way from Washington to Worth, and had "started with a splurge," as the chroniclers

declared. Laura's gowns and airs and graces won her no end of prominence, but very few friends. Winn's "high and mighty" ways, so they were termed by all the garrison, in which at that time only two or three West Pointers could be found, had alienated all the subs, most of the seniors, and many of the women. Their extravagance during the first year of service, the explanations and excuses tendered by Laura in the next, and Harry's increasing moodiness and distraction, served only to widen the breach. Men and women both, who began by envying, turned to openly decrying. Cutting things were said to Laura, whose mendacities provoked them. Sneering or at least suggestive things were often said in presence of Winn, if not exactly to him; for there was one quality about the swell the garrison had to respect,—his cheerful and entire readiness to fight on very small provocation, and those were the days when the tenets of the "code" were not totally forgotten, and there still remained in the army a sentiment in favor of the doctrine of personal responsibility for disparaging words. There would be fewer courts-martial to-day were there more of it left. But when women heard the stories about the big bill at the sutler's and others that came by mail, and made little icy comments about some people being able to afford much more than *they* could, Laura laughed off the allusions to their superior style of living by stories of an indulgent papa, until papa's death left her without further resource from that quarter. Then she set afloat a fabrication about a doting aunt of Harry's who had no children of her own,—an amiable old widow who was to leave him all her money. He did have an aunt of that description, but she didn't have the money, and there were men who were malicious enough to refer in Winn's presence to their wish that they had wealthy fathers-in-law or doting dowager aunts, thereby giving some other fellow a chance to say, "And so does Fuller, no doubt."

Indeed, so practically friendless were the Winns that among nine out of ten families along officers' row there was a feeling of lively curiosity to note the effect of this supposably crushing blow on the unhappy pair, and a consequent sentiment, only partially veiled in many cases, of keen disappointment when the news flew around the garrison that Mr. Winn had announced his readiness to meet the demand in full.

"Why, it can't be true," said many a woman. "I'll believe it when I see the money," said many a man. "Do you suppose—he could have accepted it from—Captain Barclay?" asked, in strictest confidence, Mrs. De Lancy of Laura's erstwhile intimate, Mrs. Faulkner.

"Not *Harry* Winn, probably," answered Mrs. Faulkner, in confidence equally inviolable, "but——" and the pause that followed was suggestive. Follansbee and Bellows bolted down to the sutler's with the surprising news, wondering if Fuller could have been ass enough to advance the money. There was a time when he would have done so, perhaps, for he was one of the first to be enthralled by young Mrs. Winn's grace and beauty, and lavished presents upon her—and upon Winn, of course—for a month, until Winn put a stop to the presents and Mrs. Fuller came post-haste back from San Antonio and put a stop

to other manifestations. But Fuller had long since become estranged from the Winns,—the presentation of his bill at inopportune times having later widened the apparent breach. His jaw fell and his mouth opened wide when he heard the news, for Fuller had begun to believe that he would never get his money, and resented it that Uncle Sam should be luckier.

"Send up another 'bill rendered' by Ikey to Mr. Winn this afternoon," he bade his clerk, as the investigators departed to follow other clues. Fuller had gone down into his pockets, unbeknown to the post, and had actually pressed on Lawrence a loan of three hundred dollars, and bade him come for more when that was gone, but not a cent would he put up for Harry Winn,—not he; "the damned supercilious snob," was what Fuller now called him, not so much because he thought him a snob or supercilious or even deserving of damnation, as because he had allowed himself to be robbed of three thousand dollars' worth of goods that might otherwise have been purchased of him, Fuller, for double or treble the money. No, plainly, Fuller was not the angel that had come to the rescue of Winn, nor could Follansbee or Bellows or the rest of the fellows find out who had. The mystery of Gilgal was outdone. Even Frazier and Brooks did not know, and when some one, possibly Mrs. Frazier, suggested to the colonel that as the commanding officer he really ought to know, the colonel did send for his new quartermaster and say to him, "Mr. Trott, as you are to receipt to Mr. Winn for the money value of his shortage, it would be well to be very circumspect. He probably cannot have that much in currency here. How does he propose to pay it?"

"I don't know, sir," said the man of business, promptly. "He says he will be ready to cover the entire amount on or before the 20th of May. I didn't like to ask him where it was to come from."

Neither did Frazier, despite no little prodding at home. Only one man ventured to speak of it to Winn, and, the resultant conversation having been variously and exaggeratively reported, the truth should here be told. It was at the club-room, which, for the first time in weeks, Mr. Winn entered. He asked for Major Brooks, and, finding him absent, turned to go out with no more than a nod to the party at the poker-table. That party was made up mainly of the class that was numerous in the army in those days and is as rare as an Indian fight now. The least responsible among them at the moment was Lieutenant Bralligan, ex-corporal of dragoons, who could no more have passed the examination exacted of candidates to-day than a cat could squeeze through a carbine. "Hwat d'ye warrnt of the meejor, Winn?" he shouted. "Sure ye've got permission to ride out wid us to meet Lawrence."

Winn vouchsafed no answer. Bralligan and he were things apart, a reproach to each other's eyes, and the evil blood in the Irishman, inflamed already by whiskey, boiled over at the slight. "It's Barclay ye're looking for, not Brooks!" he shouted, in tempestuous wrath. "Faith, if ye want anything out o' the Quaker, let yer wife do the——"

Instantly a brawny hand, that of Captain Follansbee, was sprawled

over the broad, leering mouth. Instantly there was a crash of chair-legs hastily moved, of grinding boot-heels as men sprang to their feet, of poker-chips flying to the floor,—a sound of oaths and furious struggles, for two of the party, with the attendant, had hurled themselves on the half-drunken lieutenant and were throttling him to silence, while Captains Bronson and Fellows sprang to head off Winn, who with blazing eyes and clinched fists came bounding back into the room.

"What did that blackguard say?" he demanded. "I did not catch the words."

"Nothing, nothing, Winn, that you should notice," implored Bronson. "He's drunk. He doesn't know what he is saying. He's crazed. No, sir," insisted Bronson, sternly, as Winn strove to pass him. "If you do not instantly withdraw I shall place you under arrest. Be sure that this poor devil shall make all reparation when he's sober enough to realize what has happened. Go at once.—You go with him, Fellows."

And so between them they got Winn away, and others soused Bralligan with *acequia* water and locked him up in his room and had him solemnly sober by afternoon stables, while, vastly to their relief, Winn with two or three cavaliers rode away at three o'clock to meet Ned Lawrence somewhere afar out on the Crockett trail. Greatly did Follansbee and Fellows congratulate Bronson, and Bronson them, on the fact that they had happened to be looking on at the game when Winn happened in and Bralligan broke out; for thereby they had stopped what might have been a most tremendous row. "All of which mustn't be known to a soul," said they.

But Bralligan's voice was big and deep. It was one of the causes of his unhallowed preferment in the days when second lieutenancies were showered on the rank and file the first year of the war. Bralligan's taunting words, only partially audible to Winn as he issued from the front of the building, were distinctly heard by domestics lying in wait for a chance to borrow of the steward and pick up gossip at the back. By stables that evening the story was being told high and low all over the post; even the children heard with eager yet uncomprehending ears; and so it happened that just as the drums of the infantry were sounding first call for retreat parade, and the womenfolk were beginning to muster on the porches, and the warriors of the Foot along the opposite side at the barracks, and as Captain Barclay, a light rattan stick in his hand, came strolling back from stables, Lieutenant Brayton at his side, little Jim Lawrence made a dash from a group of children, and, in the full hearing of several officers and half a dozen women, a shrill, eager, childish voice piped out the fatal words,—

"Uncle Gal—Uncle Gal—what did Mr. Bwalligan mean by telling Mr. Winn to send his wife to you for money?"

Laura Winn herself was on the nearest piazza at the moment, stunningly handsome, and posing, evidently for a bow from her next-door neighbors as they came by. She and every other woman there distinctly heard the words and marked the effect.

Sir Galahad's face flushed crimson. He caught his little friend up in his arms and held him close to his burning cheek. "Hush, Jimmy boy. He meant nothing, and soldiers never repeat such nonsense. Run to sister Ada and help her get everything ready for papa's coming. Think, Jimmy, he'll be here by tattoo." And with a parting hug he set the youngster down at his door-step and started him on his way. Then, courteously raising his cap to the gathering on the nearest porch, and noting, as did they, that Mrs. Winn had disappeared within her hall, Barclay quickly entered his own portal, and nabbed Brayton as he was making a palpable "sneak" for the rear door. The youngster found escape impossible. Will he, nill he, the boy told the story as it had been told to him, Barclay standing looking straight into his eyes, as though reading his very soul, yet never saying a word beyond the original, "You heard what Jimmy said. It is another instance of 'out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,' Brayton. Now, tell me exactly what you know."

It was a warm May evening. A hot southwester had been blowing from the broad valley of the Rio Bravo, and the few men in the club-room at nine o'clock were demanding cooling drinks. Bralligan was there, looking somewhat solemn and sheepish. He knew that nothing but the presence of senior officers had prevented a serious fracas as the result of his asinine bray that morning, but, now that Winn was out of the way and the matter in the hands of his captain, he had no dread of the thrashing he deserved, and was disposed to an exhibition of bravado. A drink or two added to his truculence, as well as to his desire to resume the game interrupted that morning. There were always in those days a few reliable gamblers at the big frontier posts, and presently Bralligan, in his shirt-sleeves, was contemplating a sizable pile of chips and bantering a burly captain to "see his raise," when suddenly he became aware of a distracted look in the eyes of the group about the table, and, glancing towards the door, his own blood-shot orbs lighted upon the trim figure of Captain Barclay, standing calmly surveying the party,—Barclay, who never smoked, drank, or played cards, and who was reported to have started a movement for prayer-meetings among the enlisted men. His very presence in that atmosphere was ominous, especially as the gaze of his usually soft brown eyes was fixed on Bralligan. One or two men said, "Good-evening, captain," in an embarrassed way, but the Irish subaltern only stared, the half-grin on his freckled face giving place to an uneasy leer. On a bench to the left of the entrance stood a huge water-cooler, with gourds and glasses by its side. Underneath the spigot was a big wooden pail, two-thirds full of drippings and rinsings. Without a word, the new-comer stepped quietly within the room, picked up the bucket, and, striding straight to the table before Bralligan could spring to his feet, deftly inverted the vessel over the Irishman's astonished head, deluging him with discarded water and smashing the rim well down on his unprotected shoulders. An instant more, and Bralligan sent the bucket whirling at his assailant's head, which it missed by a yard, then, all dripping as he was, followed it in a furious charge. Sir Galahad "side-clipped" with the ease and nonchalance of long but

unsuspected practice, and let fly a white fist which found lodgement with stunning crash straight under the Irishman's ear, felling him like an ox.

CHAPTER VIII.

And so Ned Lawrence got back to Worth to find it far livelier than when he left it. The stage with its joyous escort had come trundling in just before tattoo, and first and foremost the returning wanderer was driven to his own doorway and left for half an hour with Ada and Jimmy—the one sobbing with joy, the other laughing with delight—on the father's knees. Then Mrs. Blythe stole in to bid them to the waiting supper, and, pending Lawrence's reappearance somewhere along the line, the officers gathered in low-voiced groups discussing the startling event of the evening. Bralligan, raging for the blood of the double-dashed, triple-adjectived hound who had assaulted him, had been lugged home by two or three of his kind, consoled by Captain Mullane with the assurance that he'd see that the preacher gave him full satisfaction in the morning, for, with native love of a ruction, Mullane stood ready to bear the subaltern's challenge, even though his better nature told him the ducking was richly deserved: with Irish honor in question, Mullane was for fight. Frazier and Brooks, of course, said the seniors present, must not be allowed official knowledge of what had taken place, though in those benighted days of magnificent distances from the centre of civilization and the exploring grounds of reporters of the press, many a stirring row was settled without its ever being heard of beyond the limits of the garrison in which it occurred. Captain Barclay, contenting himself with the one blow, despite an unchristian impulse to follow it up with a kick at the sprawling figure, had stood calmly by when Bralligan's associates lifted him, half stunned, to his feet, then, addressing himself to Mullane, with just the least tremor in his voice and twitching to his muscles, remarked, "Of course you know what led to this, sir. If your lieutenant desires to follow it up, you can find me at my quarters." Then, looking very deliberately around upon the little circle of flushed or pallid faces,—there were only five officers present,—he slowly turned, walked away, and shut himself in his room.

A light was still burning there when Brayton tiptoed in at half-past ten. He, with several other cavalrymen, had been sitting in the major's parlor, listening to Lawrence's tale of his experiences in Washington. Winn had rejoined the party late, and one glance at his face was enough to tell Brayton that somewhere he had heard of the fracas at the club-room. Brayton's boyish heart was bubbling over with pride and delight in this new and unlooked-for side to his captain. Every day of his service with that officer only served to strengthen the regard and admiration Brayton felt for him. Barclay had made no pretence of being a cavalryman on the strength of his assignment to that arm. He started with the assertion that he had everything to learn, and then surprised his subaltern by an extensive knowledge of

what we then called "the tactics." He was certainly not as much at home in saddle as on foot, and did not pretend to be, but he was by no means a poor or ungraceful rider. He had a light, gentle hand, at least,—a thing much harder for most men to acquire than a good seat. He was very cool, just, and level-headed with the members of the troop, not a few of whom thought to "run it" on the "doughboy" captain; but all such projects had flattened out within the fortnight after his coming. Barclay might not know horses, but he did know men, and the first sergeant was the first to find it out,—the new captain calmly and almost confidentially pointing out to him, after ten days of apparently casual glancings over the mess-room and kitchen, that the men were not getting their proper allowance of coffee, and that the savings made on the rations did not all go where they belonged.

"Boy an' man, sorr," began Sergeant Sullivan, oratorically and with fine indignation, "I've sarved in the dragoons or cavalry the best fifteen years of me life, and this is the furrst time me honor's been called into account. I shall tindher me resignation at wanst."

"I have had its acceptance in contemplation for some days, sergeant," was the calm response. "But first we'll overhaul the accounts."

"Currnel Larns's, sorr, would niver have treated an ould soldier in this way."

"That, I fear, is true," was the imperturbable response, "and as a consequence the colonel appears to have been robbed right and left,—your own name being brought into question. That will answer for the present, sergeant."

And when the troop heard that Denny Sullivan had been "broke" and was to be tried by court-martial for thieving, great was the comment excited, and the men began to wonder what manner of doughboy was this, after all, that had come to them,—the doughboy that ould Denny had so confidently counted on running to suit himself. But this didn't begin to be all. A very acute trailer was Galahad. Those were days in which only a subaltern, and not always even a subaltern, was expected to appear at morning stables; but the new captain liked to rise early, he said. He was up with the sun or earlier, and hoof- or wheel-tracks about the stables before the herd was led forth to water never escaped his attention, yet apparently never excited remark. Within the third week, however, another non-commissioned officer was suddenly nabbed, and so was a wagon-load of forage, going off to a neighboring ranch at four o'clock in the morning. Meantime the men noted that their coffee and rations were better and more bountiful, and soldiers are quick to receive impressions that come by way of the stomach. "The new captain is knocking out the old abuses," said they, and it was wonderful how soon the ex-doughboy made his way into their good graces. There had been some disposition on the part of the wits in other companies to refer to Barclay's men as "The Parson's Own" when it was announced that the captain had attended the chaplain's evening service, but even that was beginning to die out, when all of a sudden it was noised abroad this evening that the redoubtable Bralligan had been felled by a single blow of that Quaker fist.

Brayton was fairly quivering with excitement this night of nights,

and could not sleep. He longed to see his captain and hear his version of the affair, but the door was tightly closed instead of being invitingly open, and he dared not intrude. Not one word had been said about the matter at the major's, but Brayton knew it would soon be known even to the officer in command. So long, however, as it was not reported to him officially, Frazier would probably let the affair take its course. Bralligan deserved the knock-down, and doubtless would be glad enough to let the matter end there. But, thought Brayton, if he should demand satisfaction, and Barclay's religious or conscientious scruples were to prevent his acceptance, "*then* comes my chance," for the youngster himself proposed to take it up. He had no scruples. He had been longing for a chance to kick that cad Bralligan for over a year, and after all it was Barclay that got it.

Eleven o'clock, and Barclay's light still burned. Eleven-thirty, and still, reading or writing, the captain seemed occupied in the old poker room, and the door remained closed. Once or twice Brayton heard him moving about, and in his own excitement and interest the boy found it impossible to think of anything else. Twelve o'clock came. He was beginning to undress and prepare for bed, still uneasily watching the light shining through the crack of the door, when his straining ears caught the sound of a footfall underneath his window. It opened on the yard, and the sill was only five feet or so above the ground. A hand was uplifted without and tapped gently on the sash, and as Brayton drew aside the curtain Harry Winn's face was revealed in the moonlight.

"Come to the porch in front," he muttered low. "I must speak with you."

Brayton was out on the dark piazza in half a minute. He found Winn nervously pacing the boards.

"I told my wife I had to come out and think quietly awhile," he said, as he extended a hand to his silent classmate. "She heard of this —this damnable business almost as quick as it happened. That girl of ours hears everything and tells anything. There's no doubt about it, I suppose. You were there? You heard it at once, didn't you? What does—*he* say?" And Winn's nod indicated that he meant Barclay.

"Nothing," said Brayton, briefly. "I haven't seen him——"

"But he's up. The light's in his window. He's writing—or something. Look here, Brayton, you know what's got to come of this. That damned Irishman must challenge him, or be cut and kicked about by all his kind in the cavalry. It isn't Barclay's fight; it's mine. The more I think of it the more I know that, contemptible a blackguard as Bralligan is, he is still an officer of the regiment. He has been knocked down, and has the right to demand the only satisfaction there is for a blow. You know it as well as I do. What I've got to do right here and now is to take that fight off Barclay's hands, and you've got to help me."

"S'pose he don't want it taken off his hands," said Brayton, sturdily. "He told him plain enough he was ready to meet any demand——"

Winn reddened even in the pallid moonlight. "I say no man in this garrison fights on my wife's account except me—or with me. They're up with Bralligan now, two or three of them, and I want you to go there with me at once as my witness. I mean to cowhide him to-night. Then if he wants a meeting in the morning, I'm his man." And as he spoke Winn thrashed nervously at the railing with the stout whip he carried in his hand.

"That won't fix it," answered Brayton, "and you ought to have sense enough to know it. Barclay has the precedence. The Mick couldn't challenge you until he'd fought him—or been refused a fight. You go to bed, Winn," and Brayton spoke even lower. "Your wife must have heard you just now, and first thing you know Barclay will hear you, and"—with almost comical irrelevance—"you don't want to meet him this way, when you haven't even called on him."

Winn reddened again. There was a tinge of bitterness in his tone as he answered,—

"Don't trouble yourself about Mrs. Winn's hearing. She's placidly asleep—long ago. As for my not calling, you know I've only been out of my bed three days or so, and Captain Barclay must understand that a man burdened as I have been is in no mood for social observances. This is all begging the question. You're the only man I can ask to be my second. Finish your dressing now and come."

"Winn, I won't do it," said Brayton, with flat-footed decision. "This is my captain's affair, and, from what I've seen of him since he joined, I'm bound to say what's his is mine. Besides, you've got no business mixing up in the matter. You've got your wife to think of, and you've got that commissary business to straighten out. Barclay and I have no encumbrances of either kind." At the moment, I fear me, the young gentleman could have added, "Thank God!" for, with all his appreciation of the physical perfections of his classmate's wife, Mr. Brayton was keenly aware of her many extravagances.

"Of course I've a wife," answered Winn, hotly. "It's because of her I feel bound to take this up. As for that commissary money, every cent will be here to square the shortage, whether I am or not. I'll tell you what others—— No! I can't even tell you, Brayton. But an old friend of my father's has offered his help. Now, once more, will you come or not?"

"No, Winn. You know well enough I'd see you through if—— Hush! There's Mullane and some one else coming out of his quarters now."

"Then, by God! I'll go alone," exclaimed Winn, "and it's got to be done before they get away." And he would have gone springing down the steps, but Brayton seized and held him.

"For God's sake, Harry, be quiet to-night. Don't go near him. Quiet, man! Can't you see? Those fellows are coming this way now!"

True enough, Mullane and his companion, who had issued from the fourth set of quarters down to the left, turned northward the moment they reached the walk, the moonlight gleaming on the buttons of their uniform frock-coats, but the sight and faint sound of scuffling

on Winn's porch seemed to attract their attention. They stopped as though to reconnoitre, and just then the front door of Brayton's hall opened wide, and, with the broad light at his back, Captain Barclay stepped quietly forth.

"Brayton," he said, "you left the door ajar, and it was impossible not to hear the latter part of this conference.—Mr. Winn, I presume," he continued, with calm, courteous bow, as the two young men, unclasping, turned and faced him. "I infer that you purpose going to Mr. Bralligan's quarters—now. Let me urge that you do nothing of the kind. Brayton is right. I see that, late as it is, some of their party are moving this way. Pray remember that as yet this is entirely my affair."

There was no time for other answer than a bow, a mumbled word or two, an embarrassed acceptance of the hand extended by the captain. Just as he said, Mullane and his friend were coming rapidly up the walk. They passed the Winns' gate, entered that of Brayton, and then it appeared that Mullane's friend was the ubiquitous Hodge, that Mullane was manifestly in his glory, and that both were perceptibly in liquor.

"Gintlemen," said the doughty captain, halting at the foot of the steps and raising his forage-cap with magnificent sweep, "gintlemen, I am the beerer of a missige from me frind Mr. Bralligan. Have I the honor of addhressin' Captain Barclay?" Fondly did Mullane imagine that he impressed his hearers as did Sir Lucius O'Trigger; and much did he remind one of them, at least, of Captain Costigan of blessed memory.

"This is Captain Barclay," that gentleman answered, in low tones, with a smile of amusement at Mullane's grandiloquent prelude, yet stepping quickly forward to meet the envoys. Winn could not but note that the captain's movement accomplished at once two objects. It left him and Brayton in the shade; it kept Mullane and Hodge in the moonlight and off the steps. "Pardon my suggesting that a lady sleeps in the front room aloft there, and that you speak low, so as not to disturb her. Where is your message?"

This was trying. Mullane loved his chest tones as he did his whiskey. His low voice was apt to be thick and husky and unimpressive, and to-night he was over-weighted with the sense of the gravity and importance of his mission, if with nothing else.

"Sorr," he said, with another flourish of the cap, "in accordince with the practice of gintlemen in the old arrumy, I am the bearer of a verrbal missige——"

The Quaker captain had already amazed the old dragoon sergeants by the intricacy and extent of his knowledge of their manners and customs. Now came a surprise for the officers.

"Pardon my interrupting," he said. "I do not assume to instruct in such matters, but there is manifestly only one kind of message 'according to the customs of the old army,'" and here he smiled quietly, "that should come from Mr. Bralligan now, and it must come in writing. I decline to recognize any other." Here Brayton nudged Winn approvingly, but the subalterns maintained a decorous silence.

"I've niver hurr'd of a challenge being refused on that account," said Mullane, majestically, "and if me wurreds are not sufficient, here's me frind Mr. Hodge——"

"Your words are not brought into question, Captain Mullane, but the manner of your message is. Let your friend put it in writing, and it will be received. Good-night to you, sir."

And, to Mullane's utter amaze and confusion, quickly followed by an explosion of wrath, Captain Barclay coolly turned and walked within-doors.

"Hould on dthere!" cried Mullane, as he started to spring up the steps, but Brayton stepped in front of him, and Hodge nervously grabbed his arm. Neither knew much of the "code" of the old days, but each had learned that Barclay rarely made a mistake. Winn, too, tall and strong, stepped in front of the angry Irishman as he broke out into expletives. "No more of that here, captain," he cried, forgetful of any consideration of rank. "This noise will wake the post. Rest assured your principal will get all the fight he wants;" and then, with growing wrath, for Mullane was struggling to come to the steps, "so will you, by God, if you advance another foot."

"Winn—Winn, for heaven's sake, I say!" cried Brayton, seizing the uplifted arm. "Go home, Mullane. Damn it, you're in no shape to handle such a matter to-night. Go home, or I swear I'll call the officer of the day. He's coming now!" he exclaimed; and it was true, for the sound of excited voices had reached the adjoining quarters, and out from the doorway, sashed and belted, came the massive form of Captain Blythe, his sabre clanking on the door-sill. Out, too, from Winn's hallway shot a broad beam of light, and hastening along the porch came a tall, graceful form in some clinging rose-tinted wrapper, all beribboned and fluffy and feminine. The men fell away and Mullane drew back as Mrs. Winn scurried to her husband's side and laid her white hand on his arm. Forth again on the other side of Winn came Barclay, and his deep tones broke the sudden silence.

"Captain Mullane, leave this spot instantly," he ordered, stern and low. "I'll answer to you in the morning."

"Come out of this, Mullane," demanded Blythe, striding in at the gate. "Delay one second, and I'll order you under arrest."

Up slowly went Mullane's cap with the same incomparable sweep. "In the prisince of leedies," said he, "I'm disarrumed. Captain Barclay, I'll see ye in the marrnin'."

But when the marrnin' came both Mullane and his principal, beside bewildering headaches, had graver matters to deal with than even a very pretty quarrel.

CHAPTER IX.

FROM the night of her brilliant appearance at the garrison ball, not once had Mrs. Winn an opportunity to exchange a dozen words with Captain Barclay. Her husband, as has been said, had failed to call on his new next-door neighbor, although Winn had been well enough to

be about for several days, and until he did call it was impossible for Barclay to enter their doors, and expedient that he should avoid Mrs. Winn wherever it was possible to do so. This might not have been difficult, even though the same roof covered both households,—that of the Winns on the south and that of the Barclay-Brayton combination on the north side,—but for Laura Winn herself, who seemed to be out on the porch every afternoon as the captain came walking back from stables; and the women who were apt to gather at Mrs. Blythe's at that time declared that there was something actually inviting, if not imploring, in the way Mrs. Winn would watch for him, and bow, and seem to hover where he could hardly avoid speaking to her. Three times at least since that memorable party had she been there "on watch," as Mrs. Faulkner expressed it, and though his bow was courtesy itself, and his "Good-evening, Mrs. Winn," most respectful, and even kindly, if one could judge by the tone of his voice, not another word did he speak. He passed on to his own gateway, Brayton generally at his side, and his stable dress was changed for parade uniform or dinner before he again made his appearance.

After the manner of the day, most of the cavalry contingent stopped in at the club-room on the way back from evening stables. Brayton used to do so, but, though no one could say his captain had preached to him on the subject, some influence either of word or of example had taken effect, and the young bachelor seemed entirely content to cut the club and the social tipple, and to trudge along by his new companion's side. They had been getting "mighty thick" for captain and second lieutenant, said some of the others; but, serenely indifferent to what others said, the two kept on their way.

"Thought you were goin' to wear mournin' for Lawrence the rest of your natural life, Brayton; and here you are tyin' to Barclay as if Lawrence had never lived," said Mr. Bralligan, only a day or two before Lawrence's return, and Brayton started almost as though stung. What Bralligan said was not half as ill grounded as most of his statements, and Brayton was conscious of something akin to guilt and self-reproach. In common with most of the regiment, he had felt very sore over Lawrence's going. He had been much attached to that gallant and soldierly captain, but now that another had taken his place, and he could compare or contrast the two, the youngster began to realize with something like a pang of distress—as though it were disloyal to think so—that in many ways Barclay was "head and shoulders" the superior man. Lawrence never rose till eight o'clock except when in the field. Lawrence rarely read anything but the papers and interminable controversies over the war. Lawrence, despite the claims of Ada and little Jimmy, often spent an evening at the club, and always stopped there on his way from stables. Lawrence never studied, and off the drill-ground never taught. Indeed, almost all the drills the troop had known for months and months Brayton himself had conducted. No wonder the boy had wasted hours of valuable time. No wonder there was a little game going on among the youngsters in Brayton's "back parlor" many a day. He had simply been started all wrong.

But even before Barclay's books were unpacked the new captain had found means to interest the young fellow in professional topics that Lawrence had never seemed to mention. Barclay had evidently been taking counsel with progressive soldiers before joining his new regiment, had been reading books of their choosing, and among others was a valuable treatise on the proper method of bitting horses, and he found that here was a matter that Lawrence and Brayton had never thought of and that Brayton said was never taught them at the Point,—which was strictly true. To the amaze and unspeakable indignation of Denny Sullivan, who was soon to be overhauled on graver points, the doughboy had taken his lieutenant from horse to horse in the troop as they stood at rest during drill, and shown him at least twenty bits out of the forty-five in line that were no fit at all. He showed him some that were too broad from bar to bar and that slid to and fro in the tortured creature's mouth; others that hung too low, almost "fell through;" others whose curb-chain or strap, instead of fitting in the groove, bore savagely on the delicate bones above it and tormented the luckless charger every time his rider drew rein. Barclay gave the boy his own carefully studied hand-book; not another cavalry officer then at Worth had read it, though several had heard of it. The youngster was set to work fitting new bits by measurement to the mouth of every horse in the troop.

Then Barclay drew him into the discussion of the cavalry system of saddling as then prescribed,—the heavy tree set away forward close to the withers,—and Brayton could only say that "that was tactics and the way they'd always done it." But Galahad pointed out that the tactics then in use were written of a foreign dragoon saddle with a long flat bearing surface. It was all very well for that to be set as far forward as it would go, because even then the centre of gravity of the rider would be well back on the horse. "But," said he, "you take this short McClellan tree, place that away forward, and then set a man in it; his centre of gravity will rest in front of the centre of motion of the horse,—will throw the weight on the forehand and use up his knees and shoulders in no time." This, too, set Brayton to studying and thinking, while Mullane and Fellows declared Sir Galahad a crank, and even Brooks and Blythe, wedded to tradition, thought him visionary. Then when the books came, Galahad unpacked, and just where the poker-table used to stand it stood now, but it was covered with beautiful maps of Alsace and Lorraine, and Galahad's desk with pamphlets sent him from abroad, the earliest histories of the memorable campaign about Metz and Sedan. The next thing Brayton knew he was as deeply interested as his captain, and, lo, other men came to look and wonder and go off shaking their heads,—those of them who were of the Mullane persuasion sneering at those "book-generals," while others, like Blythe, pulled up a chair as invited and followed the junior captain through his modest explanation with appreciative eyes. Those were days when there was all too little time for study and improvement, thanks to the almost incessant Indian scouting required; but here was Worth, a big post, and here was a four-troop battalion with a gentleman and not a bad soldier at its head, and

it had not occurred to him to teach them anything or to require of them anything beyond the usual attention to stables, troop-drill, and an occasional parade. If his men were reasonably ready to take the field in pursuit of Kiowa, Comanche, or horse-thief, and to furnish escort for ambulance and train when the disbursing officers went to and fro, that was all that could be expected of him or them in those halcyon days. And now "this blasted doughboy substitute" had come down here and was proposing to stir them all up, make them all out "so many ignoramuses," said Mullane. "Bedad, the thing is revolutionary!" And that was enough to damn it, for revolution is a thing no Irishman will tolerate, when he doesn't happen to be in it himself.

Still another thing had occurred to make Barclay something apart from the bachelors. No sooner had his modest kit of household goods arrived than the unused kitchen of Brayton's quarters was fitted up; Hannibal was ensconced therein; a neat little dining-room was made of what had been designed for a small bedchamber on the ground-floor, and Barclay amazed the mess by setting forth champagne the last evening he dined there as a member, and then retired to the privacy of his own establishment, as he had at Sanders. The Winns' housemaid had of course dropped in to see how Hannibal was getting along, and dropped out to tell her discoveries, which were few. Then Brayton found the mess saying things about Barclay he could not agree with, and he, too, resigned and became a messmate of his captain,—a change for the better that speedily manifested itself in the healthy white of his clear eyes and a complexion that bore no trace of fiery stimulants such as were indulged in elsewhere. Then there was talk of others leaving the "Follansbee family" and asking to join at Brayton's, and this gave umbrage to Erin as represented in the bachelors' mess. And so an anti-Barclay feeling had sprung up at the post, among the unlettered at least, and these were days in which the unlettered were numerous. "Sorry for you, Brayton, me boy," grinned the senior sub of Fellows's troop. "It must be tough to come down to this after Lawrence." And he was amazed at Brayton's reply.

"Tough? Yes, for it shows me how much time I've wasted."

"Wait till we get Galahad out on the trail wid his new-fangled bits and seats," sneered Mullane but a day or two before. "That'll take the damned nonsense out of him. Faith, whin he goes I hope I may go along too to see the fun."

And, sooner than he thought for, the Irish captain had his wish.

One o'clock had just been called off by the sentries, and the moon was well over to the west, when the door of the major's quarters was opened and he with his lingering guests came forth upon the broad piazza, the red sparks of their cigars gleaming anew as they felt the fan of the rising breeze. Clear and summer-like as was the sky, there was a reminder of the snow-peaks in the wings of the wind, and Lawrence huddled his old cavalry cape about his shoulders as he faced it. He was talking eagerly, perhaps a little bombastically, of this great new mining company in which Buffstick was prominent as a director. He was full of hope and anticipation and disposed to patronize a trifle his friends who, wedded to the humdrum of the army, were

debarred from so fine an opportunity of making money in abundance. So many of the number were going to do so much in the same way when first they left us for the broader paths of civil life.

"I tell you, Brooks," he said, "I wouldn't take ten thousand dollars cash this night for my chance of making twice that sum within the year. Buffstick turns everything he touches into gold."

"Wonder if Barclay knows these mines," said De Lancy, reflectively, flipping the ashes from the end of his cigar. "He has never opened his head about his mines to a soul. We don't know where they are."

"I don't know," said Lawrence, briefly. Even yet the mention of Barclay chafed him a bit. "I know this, though, that that company wouldn't offer me any such salary as twenty-five hundred dollars a year just to boss their men, unless there was big money in it somewhere. It's the first time I ever knew what it was to be indifferent to the coming of the paymaster. By the way, he ought to be here day after to-morrow, or to-morrow night in fact; it's long after twelve now. The escorts were warned as we came along."

"I think it a mistake," said Brooks, gravely, "to let any one know beforehand when the paymaster is to start. That Friday gang probably musters a hundred by this time. It's where all our thieves and deserters go. I haven't a doubt your old sergeant has joined them by this time, Lawrence. I believe that's where Marsden's gone, and that we'll hear from them in force again before we're a month older. They've kept reasonably quiet all winter, but June isn't far off. I'm blessed if I would want to make that trip from San Antonio with forty thousand dollars in greenbacks with less than a big troop of cavalry to guard it."

"He's got more money than that this time," said Lawrence. "Most of these men have four months' pay due them; so have the cavalry along the route. He has two other posts to pay. Hallo!" he cried, breaking suddenly off, "what's all the light about down at the sutler's? Here comes the sergeant of the guard."

Running diagonally across the parade, the moonlight glinting on his buttons and accoutrements, an infantry non-commissioned officer was speeding towards the quarters of Captain Blythe, near the upper end of the row; but, catching sight of the group at the major's, he suddenly swerved and came straight towards them, springing over the gurgling *acequia* and the dusty roadway and halting at the gate.

"What is it, sergeant?" asked two or three voices at once.

"I was looking for the officer of the day, sir. Is he here?"

"Over at his quarters, probably. What's amiss?"

"There's two of Fuller's men in, sir, from Crockett,—just about played out. They swear that not an hour after sunset the whole Friday gang—it couldn't have been anything else—came a-riding out from the foot-hills over towards the Wild Rose and kept on to the southeast. They saw the dust against the sky and hid in the rocks away off to the east of the trail, and they swear there must have been fifty of 'em at least."

He had hardly time to finish the words when the sutler himself

came galloping over the parade, "hot foot," on his wiry mustang, and drew up in front of the gate. "Has the sergeant told you?" he asked, breathlessly. "It's Reed and his partner,—two of the best men on my ranch,—and they can't be mistaken. You know what it must mean, gentlemen. The gang is after the paymaster, and I think Colonel Frazier should know at once." No wonder Fuller was breathless, bareheaded, and only half dressed. Anywhere from thirty to forty thousand dollars might be diverted from its proper and legitimate use if that Friday gang should overpower the guard and get away with it. His coffers were filled with sutler checks redeemable in currency at the pay-table, as was the vaunted way of the old army. It was a case of feast or famine with Fuller, and he poured his tale into sympathetic ears. Brooks himself went over to the colonel's, and found that weasel of a chief already awake. Mrs. Frazier didn't allow galloping over her parade in the dead of the night without an attempt to detect the perpetrator. That vigilant dame had more than once brought graceless skylarkers to terms, and the *quadrupedante putrem sonitu* of Fuller's mustang represented to her incensed and virtuous ears only the mad lark of some scapegrace subaltern, who perchance had not been as attentive to 'Manda as he should have been, and she was out of dreamland and over at the window before Fuller fairly drew rein.

"What is it, Brooks, me boy?" asked Frazier from his casement, as did gallant O'Dowd of his loyal Dobbin. "I'll be down in a minute." By the time he reached the door Fuller had hurried up his stiff and wearied scouts, and in the presence of a little party of officers the story was told again, and told without break or variation. There was only one opinion. The scattered outlaws had easily got wind of the coming of the paymaster with his unusual amount of treasure, and, quickly assembling, they were heading away to meet him far to the southeast of the big post, very possibly planning to ambuscade the party in the winding defiles of the San Saba Hills. Not a moment was to be lost. For the first time the full weight of his divorce from all that was once his profession and his pride fell on Ned Lawrence, as for an instant the colonel's eyes turned to him as of old,—the dashing and successful leader of the best scouts sent from Worth in the last two years. Then, as though suddenly realizing that he had no longer that arm to lean on, old Frazier spoke:

"Why, Brooks, you'll have to go. I can't trust such a command to Mullane, and it'll take two companies at least."

And twenty minutes later, answering the sharp summons of their veteran sergeants, the men of Mullane's and Barclay's troops were tumbling out of their bunks and into their boots, "hell-bent for a rousin' ride," and the old captain of Troop "D" was saying to the new, "Captain Barclay, may I ask you for a mount? I've been longing for two years past for a whack at this very gang, and now that the chance has come I cannot stay here and let my old troop go."

And all men present marked the moment of hesitation, the manner of reluctance, before Barclay gravely answered, "There is nothing at my disposal to which you are not most welcome, Colonel Lawrence; and yet—do you think—you ought to go?"

"I could not stay here, sir, and see my old troop go without me," was the answer.

Few were the families at Fort Worth that were not up and out on the piazzas or at the windows to see Brooks's detachment as it marched away in the light of the setting moon just as the stars were paling in the eastern sky; but the merciful angel of sleep spread her hushing wings over the white bed where two children lay dreaming, and never until the troopers were miles beyond the vision of the keen-eyed sentries did Ada know that the loved father, restored to her but a few hours before, was once more riding the Texan trail, soldier sense of duty leading on, and God alone knowing to what end.

CHAPTER X.

THE day that broke on old Fort Worth thus late in a sunshiny May proved one of deep anxiety. There was no telegraph wire then to connect it with the distant head-quarters of the department. If there had been it would have been cut six times a week. There was no way of waving back the coming convoy or of signalling danger. Crockett Springs lay a long day's ride to the southeast, and the little troop of cavalry there in camp was looking for the coming of no call upon it for duty until early on the morrow it should supply the paymaster and his party with breakfast, the ambulance with fresh mules and driver, and the night riders of the escort with their relief. Forty troopers from Crockett Springs would take the place of those who had come from the San Saba, and trot along with the paymaster until, somewhere about midway to Worth, they should meet the forty sent out the previous night to bivouac on the prairie and be ready to take up the gait and keep it until the man of money and his safe were well within the limits of the reservation. But the fifty-mile stage from Crockett to the southeast was the worst on the long line. The road wound over the divide to the valley of the San Saba, and on the way had to twist and turn through defiles of the range of hills, where more than a dozen times Indians and outlaws had defied the little detachments of cavalry scouting after them. The worst part of the pass lay some twenty miles beyond the stage station at Crockett Springs. Neither Indians nor outlaws, to be sure, had been heard of in that neighborhood for several months, but that proved nothing. It was easy for the latter to sweep from their supposed fastnesses in the Apache range to the west, and, issuing from the Wild Rose Pass, to water miles below the springs and then line the rocks in the heart of the San Saba Pass, without a trooper being the wiser. Forty cavalrymen, as Lawrence knew, would be the major's escort from the camp on the Rio San Saba beyond the range. Forty men disciplined and organized ought ordinarily to be able to cope with any band of outlaws to be found in Texas. But when, as was now reasonably certain, this far-famed Friday gang had received accessions from the troops themselves and had welcomed the deserters and desperadoes so fre-

quently sloughed off from the soldier skin of Uncle Sam in the days close following the great war, there was grave reason for precaution, and graver still for anxiety. Question as he might, Frazier could not shake an atom of the original statement of Fuller's men. Fifty mounted outlaws, at least count, with a dozen led horses, they had seen through their field-glass far over the prairie, pushing southeastward from the direction of Wild Rose Pass of the Apache range, straight for the lower valley through which ran the little stream that had its source at Crockett Springs.

So there were anxious hearts at Worth, for, while it was felt that Brooks would lose no moment and was well on his way at four o'clock of this bright Sunday morning, he had still some sixty miles to traverse before he could get to Crockett, rest and bait his men and horses, pick up Cramer's troop there camped, and then push ahead for the San Saba, where he expected to find the outlaw gang disposed in ambuscade, confidently awaiting the coming of their prey.

Now, Brooks had men enough to thrash them soundly, but unless he caught them in the act of spoliation he lacked authority. Just as sure as he pitched into a force of armed frontiersmen, they would appeal to the courts, and public sentiment would be dead against him. He could doubtless push ahead through the range, careless of lurking scouts of the would-be robbers, meet Major Pennywise and his protectors, and escort them back in safety. That problem presented no great difficulty; but what Frazier wanted and Brooks wanted and everybody, presumably, wanted was that the outlaws should be caught in the act and be punished then and there. The question was how to catch them in the act without being themselves discovered, and before the gang had had time to inflict much damage on the paymaster's party. There was the rub. "Why, their first volley, delivered from ambush, might kill half the outfit and the paymaster too," said Frazier. "No, we dare not risk it, Brooks. Push through and pull him through, that's the best we can do—unless," and here came the redeeming clause, "unless on the way you should light on some unforeseen chance. Then—use your discretion."

Mounted on the very horse he used to ride as troop commander, and with the old familiar horse-equipments, Ned Lawrence left the post at the major's side. He had slept as only soldiers can, curled up in the stage-coach, during the previous afternoon, and was in far better trim for the long ride in saddle than Captain Mullane, who with bleary eyes and muddled head rode *solus* in front of the leading troop, his one lieutenant, Mr. Bralligan, being reported by Dr. Collabone's assistant as sick in quarters, which indeed he was, with a lump the size of an apple on the side of his head, and another, apparently the heft and density of a six-pounder cannon-ball, rolling about inside of it. "D" Troop, jogging easily along at the rear of column, was led by Barclay and Brayton, both of whom had marked the absence of the subaltern of the leading company, and neither of whom was surprised when ten miles out there came galloping past them, with a touch of the hand to his hat-brim, the late regimental commissary, Lieutenant Harry Winn.

"That's good!" said Brayton, as he saw his classmate ride up to the major and report, then fall back and range himself alongside Mullane. But Barclay was silent.

"You think he ought not to have come?" asked Brayton, half hesitatingly, as he glanced at his silent leader.

"I'm thinking more of others—who should be here," was the answer. "Yet those two have so much to leave." And Brayton, following the glance of his captain's eyes, fully understood.

The morning grew warm as the sun began to climb above the distant low-lying hills to the east. The dust soon rose in dense clouds from beneath the crushing hoofs, and, leaving Brayton with the troop, Barclay cut across the chord of a long arc in the trail and reined up alongside the major. The command at the moment was moving at a sharp trot through a long, low depression in the prairie-like surface. Brooks returned the captain's punctilious salute with a cheery nod and cordial word of greeting.

"With your permission, sir, I will fall back a hundred yards or so, divide the troop into sections, and so avoid the dust."

Brooks glanced back over his shoulder. "Why, certainly, captain," said he. "I ought to have known the dust would be rising by this time. It's eight o'clock," he continued, glancing at his watch. Barclay turned in saddle and signalled with his gauntlet, whereat Brayton slackened speed to the walk, and a gap began to grow between the rearmost horses of Mullane's troop and the head of "D's" already dusty column.

"Ride with us a moment, won't you, Barclay?" called the major, significantly, as his subordinate seemed on the point of reining aside to wait for his men. "I want you two to know each other." And the new and the old captain of "D" Troop, who had courteously shaken hands with each other when presented in the dim light of the declining moon at four o'clock, now trotted side by side, Lawrence eying his successor with keen yet pleasant interest. He had been hearing all manner of good of him during the wakeful watches of the night, and was manfully fighting against the faint yet irrepressible feeling of jealous dislike with which broader and better men than he have had to struggle on being supplanted. Do what he might to battle against it, Lawrence had been conscious of it hour after hour, and felt that he winced time and again when some of the callers spoke even guardedly of the changes Barclay was making in the old troop, changes all men except the ultra-conservative ranker element (as the ranker was so often constituted at that peculiar time, be it understood) could see were for the better.

"You and Barclay lead on, will you, Ned?" said the major, in his genial way. "I wish to speak with Mullane a moment." Whereat he reined out to the right and waited for the big Irishman to come lunging up. Mullane was already spurring close at his heels, gloomily eying the combination in front. "There are Oirish and Oirish," as one of their most appreciative and broad-minded exponents, Private Terence Mulvaney, has told us; and it galled the veteran dragoon to see his junior in rank bidden to ride even for the moment at the

head of the swiftly moving column. So, reckless of the fact that his individual spurt would call for a certain forcing of the pace along his entire troop, now moving in long column of twos, Mullane had spurred his horse to close the twelve-yard gap between himself and the major's orderly, determined that there should be no conference of the powers in which he was not represented.

"Captain Mullane," said Brooks, "I see it is getting dusty. You might divide into sections, as 'D' troop has done, and keep fifty yards apart, so that the dust can blow aside and not choke your men."

"This is 'L' Troop, sorr, and my men are not babes in arrums," was Mullane's magnificent reply. At any other time he might have felt the pertinence of the suggestion, but here was a case where a doughboy captain, bedad, had instigated the measure for the comfort of his men. That was enough to damn it in the eyes of the old dragoon. The answer was shouted, too, with double intent. Mullane desired Barclay to hear what he thought of such over-solicitude; but Barclay, riding onward sturdily if not quite so easily as was Lawrence, gave no sign. He was listening, with head inclined, to the words of the keen campaigner on his right.

Brooks was quick to note the intention of the Irish officer, and equally quick to note the flushed and inflamed condition of his face, the thickness of his tongue. "So ho, my Celtic friend," said he, as he saw that two canteens were swung on the off side of Mullane's saddle, one at the cantle under the rolled blanket, the other half shaded by the bulging folds of the overcoat at the pommel. "I thought there was more whiskey than wit in your eagerness at the start; now I know it."

But even to Mullane the major would not speak discourteously. "We all know 'L' Troop is ready for anything, captain," he smilingly answered, "but I have to call for unusual exertion to-day, and the fresher they are to-night the better. Let them open out, as I say," he continued; and Mullane saw it was useless to put on further airs.

"You 'tind to it, sergeant," he grunted over his shoulder to his loyal henchman, and then, uninvited, ranged up alongside the leader.

The prairie was open here; the road split up into several tracks from time to time, and the men could have ridden platoon front without much difficulty for two or three miles. Away to the southeast the ground rose in slow, gradual, almost imperceptible slope to the edge of the far horizon, not a tree or shrub exceeding a yard in height breaking anywhere the dull monotony of the landscape. Eastward, miles and miles away, a line of low rolling hills framed the dull hues of the picture. Northward there was the same almost limitless expanse of low, lazy undulation. To the right front, the south and southwest, the land seemed to fall away in even longer, lazier billows, until it flattened out into a broad valley, drained by some far-distant, invisible stream. Only to the west and northwest, over their right shoulders, was there gleam of something brighter. The faint blue outline of the far-away Apache range was still capped in places by glistening white, while straight away to the northwest, back of and beyond the dim dust-cloud through which the swallow-tailed guidons were peeping,

hovered over their winding trail the bold and commanding heights, Fort Worth's shelter against the keen blasts that swept in winter-time across the prairie from the upper valley of the Rio Bravo. Four hours out, and just where the road dipped into that broad deep swale a quarter-mile behind the rearmost troopers,—just where the wreck of one of Fuller's wagons and the bones of two of Fuller's mules and the soft spongy mud to the west of the trail told how the waters could gather there in the rainy season and evaporate to nothingness when needed in the dry, —a solitary stake driven into the yielding soil bore on bullet-perforated cross-board the legend, "20 miles to Worth and only 20 rods to Hell."

Only twenty miles in four hours, with fresh horses and the cool of the morning, and a paymaster with forty thousand dollars in deadly danger some sixty to eighty miles away. Slow going that, yet scientific. Not another drop of water could those lively chargers hope to have until they reached the springs at Crockett, forty miles away. Thrice has Brooks halted for brief ten minutes' rest, the resetting of saddles, etc., and now, after fifteen minutes' lively jog, he signals "walk" again, and glances back to watch the march of his men. By this time the column is long drawn out. The two troops are split up into four sections each, riding a little over a dozen men in a bunch; by this means they are relieved from the ill effects of the choking clouds of dust. Mullane halts with the major. It pleases him to convey the impression to his men that Brooks can't get along without him. A big pull at his pommel canteen, ten minutes back, has temporarily braced him, and he wants to talk, whereas Brooks, intent on the duty before him, wishes to think.

"Hwat time will we make Crockett's, major?"

"Not before five or five-thirty," is the brief answer.

"'L' Troop can do it in two hours less."

"So could 'D,' if it hadn't to push on again at nightfall." Brooks answers in civil tone, despite the hint conveyed by the brevity of his words, despite the conviction that is growing on him as he somewhat warily glances over his companion, that what "L" might do its captain won't do if he consults that canteen again. Two silent but keen-eared orderlies are sitting in saddle close beside their respective officers, and it will not do to give his thoughts away.

Then Mullane tries another tack. He seeks confidential relations with his chief; and when an Irishman has a man he is jealous of to talk about and whiskey to start him, he needs no supply of facts; they bubble from his seething brain, manufactured for the occasion.

"The Preacher was caught where he couldn't get out of it," says he, with a leering wink at the leading horseman. "Is he larnin' his thrade from Lawrence, afther robbin' him av his throop?"

And now Brooks fires up unexpectedly. Turning quickly on the Irishman with anger in his eyes, the major bends forward over the pommel. "Captain Mullane," he says, so low that the near-by troopers fail to catch his words, so distinctly that the captain cannot fail to, "there are things of more value in a trade than the tricks of it that you seem to know so well. You can learn more from Captain Barclay that is worth knowing than you can ever teach him, and I'll

listen to no slur at his expense. You've been drinking too much, Mullane. Take my advice and pull the stopper out of that canteen and put one on your tongue."

The Irishman boils up with wrath. The idea of Major Mildmanners pitching into him—him, that was once the pride of the Second Dragoons!—and praising that white-livered parson! Whurroo! Mullane at the moment could have flung commission and conscience to the wind, everything but that canteen. Nothing but the stern and icy stare in Brooks's usually benignant eye represses the outburst trembling on the tangling tip of his tongue.

"If you knew—what I know, sorr, that man'd not be ridin' wid his betthers," he begins, "and it's this night that'll prove me wurrds."

CHAPTER XI.

It was at four o'clock of a blistering afternoon, twelve hours from the time of their start from the post, that the leaders in the long-extended column hove in sight of a patch of green down in a distant depression to the south that marked the site of Crockett Springs. Beyond it, hemming the broad, shallow valley, there rose a long wave of bare, desolate heights, rounded and billowing in soft and graceful contours as they rolled away northeastward, abrupt and jagged towards the south and southwest, where the stream seemed to have torn a pathway for the sudden torrents of the springtide that foamed away towards the broader valley of the Bravo. At the point where, rounding the nose of a low ridge, the trail twisted into view of Crockett's, the major halted to look back over his command, still tripping steadily onward in little bunches, each a dozen strong, each followed by its own little dust-cloud, each independent, apparently, of the others, yet moving as part of one harmonious train. Foremost, the group at the head of column had received accessions. Fuller, the sutler, finely mounted and bristling with arms of the latest and most approved pattern, backed by two sun-tanned Texans from his ranch, had overtaken the command at noon, bent on sharing its fortunes in the tussle anticipated with the outlaws; and they were now riding with "head-quarters," from which, on the other hand, two figures were missing,—Lawrence and one of the orderlies. As early as two o'clock the ex-captain had pushed on ahead, a double object in view, to warn Cramer's troop of the coming of the Worth command and the tidings they bore of the Friday gang, also to have a little party mount at once and gallop northeast, ten miles to the Saba trail,—a short cut from Worth to the San Saba Pass, used by horsemen in the rainy season. Captain Cramer might or might not have received warning of the appearance of the gang in the valley below his camp at the Springs; but the "Fridays," whoever their leader, would certainly have friends and confederates on the watch near Worth, friends who would probably take that very short cut and gallop at speed to warn the gang of the coming vengeance. Oddly enough, it was not Brooks nor Lawrence who was first to think of this, but

Barclay. It was his modest suggestion at the noon halt, a suggestion that was put in form of a question, that had opened the major's eyes. "I remember, sir," said he, "that the Springs lie in a sort of elbow; the trail runs nearly east and west for many miles beyond them, and nearly north and south on this side. Is there no way in which scouts could gallop across our left and give warning to those fellows?"

"By Jove!" said Brooks, "there's the old San Saba cut-off. What had we better do, Lawrence?" And Lawrence said, send at once a sergeant with a set of fours to the left, until they cut the trail, in order to prevent information going to the gang that way, and to report if any horsemen had already passed, which latter any old frontiersman could tell at a glance. Mullane, lurching drowsily in saddle all through the last stage, had thrown himself on the turf and gone sound asleep the moment the column halted. Only with extreme difficulty could he be aroused and made to understand what was wanted. Mr. Winn, standing silently by, turned his back on his temporary commander. He knew the Irish captain was well-nigh swamped with liquor, and he had no wish to bear witness against him. Those were days so close to the war that officers, old and new, still thought more of what a man had done than of what he was doing, and Mullane had been a gallant trooper. "You 'tind to it, sergeant," was again the Irishman's comprehensive order to his first sergeant when at last he grasped the significance of Brooks's words, and five horsemen rode away at the lope to the left front the moment the column again mounted. Again did Brooks see fit to caution his leading troop commander. "I am afraid you have sampled that whiskey once too often, Mullane. No more of it now, or you'll go to pieces when you are most needed," he muttered, then rode on to the head of column.

And the prediction came true. At the very next halt Mullane had fallen into a stupor so heavy that it was found impossible to rouse him. The assistant surgeon with the column made brief examination, then unslung and removed the canteen at the captain's pommel, and whispered his conclusion. "Better leave his horse and orderly here with him."

"Then," said the major, briefly, "Winn, you command 'L' Troop." And when again the column mounted, Barclay rode back and directed his leading section to incline to the right, so that they passed the lonely little group, the two horses placidly cropping at the scant herbage, the orderly squatting with averted face, filled at once with shame and sympathy, the recumbent figure sprawled upon the prairie, its bloated red visage buried in the blue-sleeved arms. Barclay's rearward sections instinctively followed the lead, and only furtive glances were cast, and no audible comments made. The ranks were full of tough characters in those days, yet imbued with a strange fidelity in certain lines that reminds one of the dog immortalized by Bret Harte at Red Gulch,—the dog that had such deep sympathy for a helplessly drunken man. There was nothing in their code to prevent their stealing from Uncle Sam, their captain, or any other victim, but to hint that an officer or a friend was drunk would have been the height of impropriety.

Winn, not Mullane, therefore, led "The Devil's Own," as Mul-

lane's troop—together with others, no doubt—had been appropriately designated. Barclay followed at the head of "D," when, nearing Crockett Springs at five o'clock, a dim speck of courier came twisting out upon the trail to meet them, and Brooks long after recalled the thought that came to him as he read the despatch that reached him there. It was from Lawrence.

"Cramer got wind of the gang early this morning, followed with thirty men into the San Saba, had sharp fight, lost three men and many horses, and is corralled out there, about fifteen miles southeast. Cramer himself wounded, Dr. Augustin killed. Courier says most of Friday gang gone to San Saba Pass. You, of course, must push on to save Pennywise and his money. I take five men and horses here and hasten to pull Cramer out of the hole. Think you now justified in attacking gang wherever found. No doubt who were Cramer's assailants. Expect to reach him before six and have one more square fight out of Texas. Hastily,

"L."

"By heaven," cried Brooks, as he turned to Fuller and the little party riding with him, all studying his face with anxious eyes, "it's lucky we got here with our horses in good shape. Cramer is in a scrape somewhere out in the Range. Lawrence has gone to his aid, and there'll only be time for a bite at Crockett's; then we must push on and go ahead to the Pass." Then, dropping into thought, "Now, which of Laura Waite's victims will most welcome a square fight,—the man she wronged by dropping, or the man she wronged by taking?"

Two hours later, refreshed by cooling draughts from the brook that bubbled away from the Springs, their nostrils sponged out, their saddles reset, their stomachs gladdened by a light feed, the horses of the two troops seemed fit for a chase, despite their sixty-mile march since dawn. A courier, galloping ahead, had borne Brooks's directions that coffee should be ready for his men, and Cramer's camp guard had found time to add substantials to that comforting fluid. Only half an hour did the major delay, but even in that time the horses had a quick rub-down with wisps of hay, and the men themselves swung into saddle with an air that seemed to say, "There's fun ahead!" The sun was shining aslant from low down in the western sky as the column once more jogged away on the dusty trail, Barclay's troop now in the lead, opening out just as it had marched most of the day, while Winn, between whom and the new captain there had passed a few courteous yet rather formal words at one or two of the halts, gave to Mullane's old first sergeant the charge of the leading section, and himself rode at the distant rear of column, for by dusk, if at all, straggling would be likely, and straggling would have to be suppressed with a firm hand. The sun was at their backs now: away to the front lay the rift in the hills through which wound the San Saba road, and off to the right front, well to the southeast, somewhere among those jagged bluffs just beginning to tinge with gold about their sharp and saw-like crests, lay the scene of Cramer's morning tussle with the outlaws, who, as all now

realized, must have opened on him from ambush and shot down several horses and not a few men before the troopers could reply. No further news had come from him, however. The courier who brought the first news said he had to run the gauntlet, although only a few of the gang seemed to be hanging about the scene of the fight,—their main body, as he had previously reported, having gone in the direction of the Pass. Brooks well knew that the moment he reached the foot-hills he would have to move with caution, throwing out advanced guards and, where possible, flankers. He knew that he would need every man, and believed that Cramer's people, now that Lawrence had gone to join them, could take care of themselves; but the courier's story, told to eager ears, had "told" in more ways than one. His description of the ambuscade, the way Cramer, the doctor, Sergeant O'Brien, and others at the head of column were tumbled at the first fire, all had tended to make the head of Brooks's column an unpopular place to ride, —at least less popular than earlier in the day. Fuller and his men decided that their horses would be the better for an hour or two of rest at the cantonment, and so the column moved on without them.

Longer grew the shadows and loftier the range far to the front, as once more the pace quickened to the trot, and Brooks and his men jogged on. The doctor, a gifted young practitioner whom Collabone held in high regard, seemed still to think that he should have been allowed to take an orderly and his instruments and gallop out on Lawrence's trail to the aid of Cramer's wounded. "Then what is to become of mine?" asked the major, calmly. "I'm sorry for Cramer, sorry his doctor is killed, but we may need you any moment more than he does. No, Lawrence has gone to him; he'll do what he can to make the wounded comfortable, leave a small guard with them, and then guide the rest of Cramer's troop through the range to the San Saba, join either Pennywise's party or ours, and between us we ought to give those fellows a thrashing they'll never forget,—if only they'll stand and take it,—if only," he added below his breath, "they don't lay for us in some of those deep twisting cañons where twenty men could overthrow a thousand."

The doctor admitted the force of his superior's argument, and said no word. All the same, however, his eyes kept wandering off from time to time towards the foot-hills at the southeast, now turning to violet in shade, "like half-mourning," said the doctor to Galahad, as, only half content, he dropped back to ride a few moments at the latter's side. "And it won't be long," he added to himself, "before they'll be shrouded in deep black. Pray God there's no ill omen in that!"

And now the road began to rise, very slowly, very gently as yet, but perceptibly, towards the still distant range. The long, spindle-shanked shadows of the horses had disappeared. The sun, yellow-red, was just sinking below the horizon through the dust-clouds in their wake, when one of the foremost troopers, close at Barclay's heels, muttered, "It's somethin' movin', anyhow, and what is it if it ain't a horse?" And Barclay and the doctor, turning in saddle, caught his eye. "I seen it a minute ago away out yonder towards them buttes," continued the soldier, pointing out across the prairie to their right front,

"and I couldn't be sure then. It's comin' this way, whatever it is, comin' fast. Look, sir! There it is again!"

And with all their eyes Barclay and the doctor gazed, but could see no moving object. Only the rolling prairie, growing darker, dimmer every minute, only the sun-tipped ridge and buttes and shining pinnacles far away towards the San Saba. And still the relentless trot went on, and the major's head was never turned; yet his orderly, too, was ducking and peering from time to time off to the southeast, just where the trooper had pointed. Barclay, cautioning his sergeant to keep a steady trot, spurred forward, the doctor following.

"What do you see?" they asked, and the orderly too stretched forth a grimy gauntlet.

"Thought I saw a horse, sir. Some of 'K' Troop's, maybe, for there was no rider."

With this corroborative evidence, Barclay hailed the major. "Major, may I send a man or two out in that direction?" he asked. "Two of our people report seeing a horse galloping this way."

But, even as he spoke, over a distant divide, popping up against the sky just long enough to catch the eyes of half a dozen men at once, a black dot darted into view and then came bounding down the long, gradual incline, looming larger and larger as it ran; presently the body and legs could be made out, and then the sweeping mane and tail,—a riderless horse, a cavalry horse probably, coming at eager speed to join his comrade creatures in the long column. Cavalry horse undoubtedly, as, bounding nearer and nearer, the flapping rein, the dangling, black-hooded stirrups, the coarse gray blanket, and the well-known saddle could be distinguished, a gruesome sight to trooper eyes, harbinger of disaster if not of death in almost every case,—a cavalry charger riderless! And at last, as with piteous neigh the laboring steed came galloping straightway on, a cry went up from two or three soldier throats at the instant, a wail of soldier sorrow: "God save us, fellows! it's Blarney—it's the colonel's own!" Officers and men, they swarmed about the weary, panting, trembling creature, as hope died in every heart at what they saw: the saddle and blanket, the old overcoat, rolled at the pommel, that so often had stood between Ned Lawrence and the Texas gales, were all dripping with blood, yet Blarney had never a scratch.

CHAPTER XII.

THE moon was throwing black shadows into the deep cleft in the San Saba, where the Crockett trail twisted along beside the swift-running rivulet, that rose in the heart of the hills and bubbled merrily away until lost in the westward valley and the brook that found its source at the springs far out under the foot-hills towards the Bravo. Slowly, wearily, warily, half a dozen troopers on jaded horses were feeling their way up the pass, a veteran corporal full thirty yards ahead of his fellows leading on. With the advance rode an officer whose shoulder-straps, gleaming on the shell jacket sometimes worn in the

mounted service immediately after the war, seemed almost too bright and new to accord with the dust-grimed chevrons and trimmings of his comrades. New and brilliant, too, were the hilt and scabbard of the sabre that dangled by his side. New and "green" the men of his command had believed him to be, in cavalry matters at least, when first he joined them some weeks before, but the most casehardened old customer among their seasoned troopers had abandoned that view before ever they started on this scout after a gang of notorious outlaws, and now a new and very different theory was grinding its way into their tired brains,—that the "Doughboy Dragoon," as they had earlier dubbed him, "Captain Gallyhad," as one of them heard he was called, could give them points in covering the front of a column that were worth knowing, even if they had been learned in a doughboy regiment and among the Sioux. It would be a smart "Friday" that managed to ambuscade old Brooks's column that cloudless, moonlit, breezeless night, for, with that veteran's full consent, as well as to his infinite relief, Captain Barclay had himself gone forward with the advance the moment they began to wind in among the hills, and there at the post of danger he had held his way, alert and vigilant, despite long hours in saddle that had told heavily on more than half the command, calm and brave despite the fact that their welcome to the westward portal of the Pass was the sight of poor Blarney running to them for shelter, sympathy, and companionship, covered with the blood of his beloved rider.

And what was that rider's fate? It was now almost eleven o'clock, and no man knew. Only briefly had they halted and flocked about the panting steed, for stern was the need that held them to their course. With awe-stricken faces and compressed lips they looked into each other's eyes, as though to ask, What next? Who next? The major, tender-hearted as a woman, well-nigh choked with distress and anxiety as he turned to Barclay for counsel; and long before the rearmost of the column had reached the spot the decision had been made. The leaders were again pushing on. Young Brayton, with half a dozen troopers, had been despatched southwestward along the *falda*, ordered to search high and low for Lawrence, dead or alive. There was only one theory,—that, pushing eagerly ahead to the relief of Cramer's crippled troop, the gallant ex-captain had taken no thought of personal danger; the old instinct of leadership had possessed him, and, foremost of his little squad, he had been picked off by lurking bushwhackers of the outlaws, crouching like Indians in the shelter of the rocks, and had fallen another victim of their desperado efforts. "One more fight in Texas," indeed. Poor, brave, warm-hearted Ned! That one more fight, reported in Washington by an indulgent department commander, might bring about immediate measures for his restoration to the army; but was it worth the risk? Was it worth what might befall those motherless children, praying for father hour after hour that livelong day? Should it have been permitted, had there been any one to prevent, in view of the fact that no longer was there soldier duty to lead him on? The government had released him from all that, had bidden him go. It had no further use for the services of such as he; it had

turned him loose upon the world, with heavy stoppages against the stipulated *bonus*. "Oh, what right had he," cried Brooks, "to forget those babies back at Worth, well knowing as he must that no man's life is worth a hair in front of the rifles of that outlaw gang, much less an enemy such as Lawrence has shown himself to be?" The major's heart and head were heavy as once more the order forward was given. With every inclination to turn from his course with his entire command, to hasten in search of Lawrence's little party and Cramer's halted men, he well knew that should the paymaster and his precious thousands fall into the outlaw hands of the Friday gang he would be held responsible, even though San Saba's cantonment sent with him a force of forty men.

Once within the jaws of the Pass, the little detachment had closed on the head of column, the advance guard, Barclay's leading section, riding on and dispersing itself under his instructions, while Brooks held the other sections until Winn's men were all closed up, bringing with them the little squads that had scouted towards the short cut of the San Saba and had found no living soul in sight, yet had followed fresh hoof-tracks coming their way for miles. Whoever they were, the scouts of the gang were well ahead; whoever he was, "Friday" by this time knew the troops were coming. Then, with the flankers scouring the slopes well out to right and left wherever possible, Brooks's main body too had entered the winding defile and was lost in the bowels of the earth.

At eleven o'clock a watcher, gazing back into the broad shallow depression in which lay Crockett's, and then northward to the low-lying hills along the trail to Worth, could have seen no gleam of light far or near that would speak of human habitation or life or movement, no sign, in fact, of life of any kind; yet no sooner was the last shadowy form of horse and trooper swallowed up in the black gloom of the defile, no sooner had the last faint click of iron-shod hoofs died away in the hidden distance, than there slowly rose from behind the shelter of a clump of rocks, far out to the right of the trail, a crouching figure that went almost on all-fours to the edge of the rivulet, slunk away down the bank, dodging swiftly, softly, from boulder to boulder, until it disappeared around a little shoulder of bluff five hundred yards away, was lost to view a moment, then reissued into the moonlight, this time in saddle, swinging, cowboy fashion, a *riata* about its head as it rode. Spinning up the slopes and out of the stream-bed, away it went, careering up the billowy rise to the south, and was presently lost to view a second time behind some castellated rocks along the crest. Three minutes more, and these began to glow along their eastward face with the light of some unseen fire that flared for perhaps a minute somewhere about the hidden base of the group, and then, far away to the southeast, far out among the buttes and knolls in the heart of the range, there was a sudden flash of brilliant light, just as though some one had touched off in front of a reflector a pound or so of rifle powder. The hills for one second were lighted up, then as suddenly relapsed into gloom. The blaze at the ledge so close at hand was promptly doused, and the night rolled on, calm, placid, and unbroken.

When the first streak of dawn crept into the orient sky, Barclay's shadowy scouts were issuing from the San Saba on the farther side and halting for the coming of the main body. Neither those who led the advance nor those out on either flank, where flankers were at all possible, had seen a sign of outlaw, cowboy, even of human being, outside their own array. Not only had the Friday gang vanished from the neighborhood of the Pass, but, what was most mysterious, not a sign had appeared of paymaster or escort, who were due at Crockett's early this very morning. Brooks, picking out the lightest rider in his weary column, sent him on the liveliest horse to warn Pennywise and his escort, provided he could find him at the San Saba camp, of what had taken place, notify him that they would here await his coming, and meantime ordered dismount, unsaddle, and graze, and in two minutes every charger was divested of his load, and many of them were kicking and rolling on the turf.

Twenty-four hours had the command been in saddle, except for the required halts and a long two hours during the dead of night, when leading their wearied steeds or crouching beside them at rest, while Barclay and his scouts explored the overhanging heights and listened eagerly for sound of coming troopers from the eastward. But for the waning moon there would have been hours of total darkness. Ninety miles, all told, had they travelled, and now, wearied though they were, nine out of ten of the men were chafing with wrath that the wily gang had managed to escape them. Whither were they gone, and where on earth was the paymaster, were the questions. Certainly not through the Pass, for there were no fresh hoof-prints. Could it be that, balked in their plan to overwhelm the escort by this coming of at least an equal force, the gang had turned back angered and thrown themselves on Cramer's crippled party with the view of getting away with the horses, arms, and equipments? Certainly none of Cramer's people had made their way by the game trails over the range to join them, but there was reason for that: Lawrence had never succeeded in reaching Cramer.

Sad, wearied, and depressed, Major Brooks seated himself on a saddle-blanket to take counsel with his officers, now reduced to three, —Barclay, Winn, and the doctor. He missed Mullane, stanch old fighter that he was, for Mullane knew most of the country thoroughly, and had been posted for months at the Rio San Saba, now only some twenty miles to the east. He sorely missed Lawrence, for on him he had often leaned. He was beginning to take vast comfort in Barclay, to be sure, but now Barclay, Winn, the doctor, men and horses, the entire command, in fact, had come to a stand-still. There was no use in going farther east; there the country was comparatively open and rolling, and the gang would hardly dare attack forty troopers on the wide prairie. Besides, the nearest water in that direction was twenty miles away; the little rivulet rising in the heart of the hills was ten miles behind them, and already horses were thirsting and men emptying their canteens. Blankly the major stared up into Barclay's drawn and almost haggard face. "Can you think of anything we ought to do?" he asked, and, in asking, Brooks was a far better soldier

than the man who, having exhausted his own resources, thought it *infra dig.* to invite suggestions from his juniors.

"Just one, sir. Sergeant McHugh tells me he once came out here hunting with Captain Mullane, and that they took a light spring wagon right over the range southeast of Crockett's, the way Cramer went. It is a much longer way round, but a more open way. The trail must lie some eight or ten miles off here to the south, or west of south. Could it be that the gang only started from the place of Cramer's ambuscade as though to go to the Pass and then veered around again and covered that trail, and for some reason have been expecting the paymaster that way after all?"

Worn and weary as he was, Brooks staggered to his feet at once, his face going paler still. "By heaven, Barclay, if that's possible, they've had uninterrupted hours in which to deal with Pennywise already! It is possible," he nodded, with misery in the emphasis of his tone. "I remember having heard of that trail, but never thought it practicable for an ambulance. Then there is work before us yet. Call Sergeant McHugh," he cried. The word was passed among the wearied groups, where, squatting or lying, the men had thrown themselves upon the ground, and presently, rubbing his red eyes, a stocky little Irish sergeant came trudging up to his commander and silently touched the visor of his worn old cap.

"Can you guide us by the shortest route from here to the trail you spoke of to Captain Barclay?" asked the major.

Mac turned and gazed away southwestward along the line of the San Saba hills.

"I don't think we could miss it, sir, if we followed the foot-hills."

"Then we must try it," said Brooks, decidedly, half turning to the silent officers as he spoke. "Let the horses graze ten minutes more and get all the dew and grass they can, then we'll push for it."

And so, just before five, hungry, weary, and weak,—some of the men at least,—the little squadron clambered into saddle and once more moved away. No need to leave any one to say which way they'd gone; the trail showed all that. Silently they headed for the broad valley of the Bravo, miles away to the invisible west. Once across a little rise in the *falda*, Brooks struck the slow trot he had learned long years before from the beloved major of his old regiment, and doggedly the column took it up and followed. Not a mile had they gone when the sun came peering up over the heights far in their wake; for a few minutes the dew flashed and sparkled on the turf before it died beneath that fiery breath, and still no man spoke. Sound sleep by night, a cold plunge at dawn, and the hot tin of soldier coffee send the morning tongues of a column *en route* "wagging like sheep's tails," say the troopers, but it takes a forced all-night march, following an all-day ride, followed by a morning start without either cold plunge or hot coffee, to stamp a column with the silence of a Quaker meeting. Let no man think, however, the fight is out of its heart, unless he is suffering for a scrimmage on any terms. Men wake up with a snap at sound of the first shot; dull eyes flash in answer to the bugle challenge, and worn and wearied troopers "take a brace" that means

mischief to the foe at the first note that tells of trouble ahead. Just two miles out there came the test to Brooks's men, and there was none so poor as to be found wanting.

Two miles out, and the column woke up at the cry, "Yon comes a courier!" and coming he was, "hell to split," said Sergeant McHugh, from afar off over the rolling prairie to the southwest. Five minutes brought him within hail,—a corporal from the camp on the Rio San Saba, on foaming horse, who came tugging at both reins, sputtering and plunging, up to the head of column, and blurted out his news. "I thought you was the escort, sir,—the paymaster's escort. They left camp at nine last night, and at two this morning Corporal Murphy got back, shot, and said they were corralled in the hills on the old trail. The captain is coming along with twenty men, and sent me ahead. They must be ten miles from here yet, sir."

"The paymaster, or the captain?" asked Brooks, his heart beating hard, but his face imperturbable.

"Both, sir, I reckon; one one way and the other the other."

Then Brooks signalled over his shoulder. "We've got to gallop, Barclay. It's neck or nothing now." And some horses even then were drooping at the trot.

Six o'clock now. Six miles from the eastward mouth of the Pass, and spurs were plying here and there throughout the column, for many found their horses lagging sorely. Barclay on his splendid blooded bay was far out to the front, the corporal courier with him, for theirs were the only mounts that could stand another forcing of the pace. Rearward, three or four horses, exhausted, were being gathered up by a burly sergeant, and with their weary riders led slowly along the trail. Six-fifteen:—Barclay and his corporal were but dots along the *falda* now, and moving swiftly. Then at a higher point, in plain view, one dot began circling to the left at speed. Every man knew what that meant, and the signal was answered by another spurt. The sun was telling at last. The dew had dried, but along the turf there was but little dust to rise, and Brooks could keep most of his men together. Far off to the left, all eyes could see now the sign that told that rival rescuers were gaining. The little squad from the San Saba camp came spurring along the beaten trail, betrayed by the cloud of dust that rose above them. Young Connolly, the guidon-bearer of Barclay's troop, unfurled his color and set it flapping in the rising breeze in trooper challenge; and down the column set and haggard faces lighted up with the gleam of soldier joy. It was to be a race,—a race to the rescue. Six-thirty, and over a low ridge went Brooks and Winn, close followed by their orderlies; far away, midway up the opposite slope, stretched a slender, twisting, traversing seam,—the winding trail to Crockett's. The black dots in the lead were now three in number, darting towards two others, black dots, too, some four miles away and to the right front, right in among the hills. "Keep it up, lads! the quicker to water and rest!" are the major's words now, and spurs set home again, despite equine grunts in protest. Six-forty, and the dots in front are blacker and bigger and popping about, three of them, at least, in lively motion, checking suddenly, then darting to and fro, and the cry bursts from

the leader's lips, "By God, they're at it! Now, lads, for all you're worth, come on!" Six-forty-five, and, rounding a projecting spur, a shoulder from the range, Brooks, Winn, and the doctor burst in view of a scene that banishes the last thought of weariness. Barely a mile or so away, a rocky ledge lies beyond and parallel with the trail. Its jagged crest is spitting smoke and fire. Its smoother slopes, towards the east, are dotted in places by the bodies of dead or dying horses, and in places, too, by other, smaller forms, apparently stiff and motionless. Off the trail, as though dragged there by affrighted and agonized animals, lies an overturned ambulance, its six draught-mules outstretched upon the turf about it; so, too, are other quadrupeds, troop-horses evidently. Well back of the ruined wagon, some trusty soul has rallied the remaining troop-horses, while most of their riders, sprawled upon the turf or behind improvised rifle-pits, stick manfully to their duty. "Friday's" ambuscade, in the still hours of the night, has cost the government heavily in horses, men, and mules, but old Pennywise's precious safe is guarded still, and every rush the outlaws make to get it is met by relentless fire. Six-fifty, and, leaving on the field six outlawed forms that will never fight again, the baffled relics of the Fridays are scurrying away into the fastnesses of the range before the labored rush and sputtering fire of Brooks's men, and Galahad, with his corporal comrade, far in the lead, gets the last compliments of the departing gang. Another gallant horse goes down, and Galahad's for the time goes free, his rider falling fainting from exhaustion and loss of blood.

CHAPTER XIII.

Old Frazier's face was sad to see when, two days later, all the harrowing details of that night's work were received at Worth. Hours before, in answer to courier from Crockett's, Dr. Collabone, with steward, attendants, and such ambulances as there were, had been put *en route* for the Springs. Two other troops had been hurried to the field, and Mrs. Blythe, with streaming eyes, was straining to her heart two motherless children, now orphaned by that "one more square fight in Texas." Gallant Ned Lawrence! Far on the way to Cramer's bewildered force they found his body, shot from ambush through and through in two places. Yet, said his weeping orderly, he had clung to the saddle nearly a mile. Oh, the wrath at Department Head-Quarters and along the line of posts and camps against that gang, made up, as so many knew it must be made, mainly of the thugs and deserters offscoured from the army in days when moral character as vouched for was no requisite before enlistment! Among the dead upon the field was found the body of a once trusted sergeant of Lawrence's troop; but the other outlaws were Mexicans or jailbirds, strange to the soldiers who turned them curiously over. Pennywise, scared half to death and dreadfully shaken by the capsizing of his wagon, was otherwise unscathed; his clerk was shot, his driver sorely wounded; two of the San Saba escort were killed, and others hit. Brooks, with Captain Haines from the

San Saba, pushed on until at noon he reached Cramer's people, now reinforced by Fuller and his men and by the shame-stricken Mullane. By nightfall his exhausted horses were drinking their fill from the stream. The two wounded officers, Barclay and Cramer, with half a dozen troopers, were being made as comfortable as possible.

By dawn of the next day Mullane's pleading had overpowered Brooks, whose heart was wrung at the contemplation of such unrequited losses, and, taking Lieutenant Winn and forty troopers with him, the Irish captain, given a chance as he prayed to redeem himself, marched away westward from the cantonment at Crockett's, bent on overtaking the outlaws in the Apache mountains, whither they had gone, burdened by half a dozen wounded, so said the one prisoner, who, unable to bear the torment of jolting along on horseback with an arm bullet-smashed at the elbow, had begged to be left behind. He was a mere boy, whose elder brother had been for years a fugitive from justice and of late a prominent member of the gang, and it was by the side of that mortally wounded ruffian they found the youngster weeping, more from grief than from pain, only a mile away from the scene of the second ambuscade.

Verily the men who planned those death-traps were masters of their villanous trade! "Concentrate all your first shots on the officers," were the instructions; "get them down, and the men will be helpless as sheep." Cramer, his doctor, and his first sergeant had fallen at the first fire, and that little command was paralyzed. Vigilant bushwhackers, schooled for years in Indian fighting, watching the Crockett trail against the coming of other leaders, had easily recognized Lawrence as he rode galloping on at the head of his half-dozen, and the "one more square fight" proved but a one-sided affair after all. Poor Ned knew he had his death-wounds at the instant, yet whipped out his revolver and ordered, "Charge!" and charge they did upon the scattering, cowardly crew that fled before them on their fresh horses until the trooper leader tumbled from his saddle, dead without a groan; and then, at safe distance, his assassins turned and jeered their helpless pursuers. How the veterans of "D" Troop clustered about their old-time captain's lifeless form that night, and, weary though they were after forty hours of sleepless chase and scout and battle, implored the major to let them start at once upon the outlaws' trail! The same tactics that had halted Cramer's men and murdered Lawrence had been played on the escort from San Saba. Riddling the ambulance at the first volley, yet in the dim moonlight missing the lieutenant commanding, who happened to be riding at the moment on the flank of his column instead of at the head, the sudden volley felled a sergeant, but left the subaltern full of fight, and he rallied his temporarily stampeded troopers not four hundred yards away, and charged back on the Fridays with a splendid dash that drove them helter-skelter to the rocks. Then, dismounting, he had stood them off superbly until rescue came.

Not for another forty-eight hours could old Pennywise be induced to go on to Worth. Though there was reassurance in the fact that the Fridays were scattered over far Western Texas by that time (some

never stopping, as it turned out, until safe from pursuit beyond the Bravo), the veteran money-changer's nerve was sorely shaken. He had not half the pluck of his punctured clerk, who, though shot by a Henry rifle bullet through the left arm and across the breast outside the ribs, declared himself fit to take even a hot and feverish drive and go with the payment. Fuller and his ranchmen stuck manfully to that much desired safe, and announced their intention of protecting the paymaster at all hazards. The wounds of Cramer and Barclay had been most skilfully treated by the young doctor before Collabone reached them; thanks to the perfect habits and vigorous constitution of the latter, there was nothing to prevent his transportation by easy stages back to Worth at the end of the week, and thither he seemed strangely eager to go. Thither they had borne the remains of poor Lawrence, and there with all military honors had they buried all that was mortal of the loved yet luckless comrade. There, her own heart sorely wrung, Mrs. Blythe was doing her utmost to comfort weeping Ada, whose burly little brother was fortunately too young to feel the desolation of their position. But, flat on his back, Barclay had pencilled to the loving-hearted woman a little note that bore her a world of comfort, despite the suffering imposed by a mandate to reveal its contents to no one but her husband; for when a woman has news—good news, great news—to tell, a husband falls far short of the demands of the situation.

Barclay's wound had been dangerous at the time, mainly because the bullet had grazed an artery below the knee and brought on profuse bleeding that, unnoticed in the excitement of the running fight, sapped him of his strength and left him swooning; but Collabone and his assistant declared it healing perfectly and that not even a limp would remain to betray it. One week from the day of the spirited skirmish in which he had played so prominent and gallant a part, Sir Galahad was lifted into the ambulance and started for Worth at the very moment the general commanding the department was forwarding to Washington his report of the affair, urgently recommending the bestowal of a brevet upon the new captain of "D" Troop and a pension upon the children of his whole-souled, hapless predecessor; but, coupling his recommendations with ill-considered yet natural reference to the injustice with which Captain and Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrence had been treated, he succeeded only in entombing the paper in some private pigeon-hole, whence it was resurrected long months after, too late to be of use.

After the manner of the army, the garrison at Worth had ceased all outward sign of mourning by the time Barclay reached the post, and almost everybody was ready to devote himself or herself to the amelioration of his condition. Mrs. Frazier, with a motherly eye to business, had lost no time in urging upon her liege the propriety—indeed, the imperative necessity—of his riding out to meet the wounded officer and moving him at once under the shelter of their roof. Amanda could and should give up her room (she was only too glad to), and the girls could sleep together; then the mother and daughters would have sole charge of the nursing of this most eligible young man. What might

not be accomplished by such a matron and such dear girls under such exceptional circumstances? Indeed, Frazier was given to understand that he must do it, for if Barclay was allowed to return to his own quarters right next door to the Winns'—and Mr. Winn away—who could say what couldn't be said?—what wouldn't be said? "Everybody knew that Laura Winn had been doing her best," said Mrs. Frazier, "to reset her nets and lure her whilom lover within the meshes," and this would give her opportunities immeasurable. Frazier had a sleepless night of it. He could not combat his wife's theories, though he would not admit the truth of all she asserted. "But," said he, "everybody will see through the scheme at a glance."

"I don't care if they do. I don't care what they say," said his energetic and strategic spouse. "The end justifies the means. Something must be done for the girls you've buried out here in this wilderness. As for Laura Winn, better a sneer at my precautions than a scandal for lack of them."

But Frazier remonstrated: "Barclay isn't the man to get mixed up in a scandal," said he.

"But Laura Winn wouldn't flinch at it," said she, "and it's the way the woman acts—not the man—that sets people talking;" wherein was Mrs. Frazier schooled beyond the sphere in which she moved. At her bidding, Frazier sent for young Brayton, who had marched back with the detachment not sent in chase, told him of Mrs. Frazier's benevolent plans for his captain's comfort, and suggested that such of Barclay's things as he might need be sent over beforehand,—"so as to have everything ready, you know."

The youngster looked embarrassed, said he would attend to it, but immediately sought Major Brooks, who was doing a good deal of resting at the time. "What am I to say to Colonel Frazier, sir?" he asked. "The colonel tells me Mrs. Frazier has a room all ready for Captain Barclay and wishes me to send over a lot of things, and I have a message from the captain saying he will probably arrive day after tomorrow and to have his room ready; and, he adds, in case any one plans to put him elsewhere, to decline in his name."

"Oh, wise young judge!" growled Brooks to himself. Every day was adding to his respect for Galahad.

"I can't decline the commanding officer's invitation, can I, sir?" asked Brayton, in conclusion.

"No, you can't with safety," said the major, "but I'll speak to Collabone—— No," he added, abruptly, as he reflected that Mrs. Frazier might eventually hear of it, Collabone being a man who knew no guile and told everybody anything he knew. "No. You tell Collabone what the captain wishes, and let him fix it." And so between the three it was arranged, through the couriers at that time going back and forth every day, that Barclay should be notified of the honor in store for him. And notified he was, and gravely passed the letter over to Æsculapius Junior.

"Help me out of this, doctor, in some way," he said. "I wish to be nobody's guest." And so, when old Frazier did actually mount a horse and, with Amanda in a stylish habit beaming at his side, did

actually ride forth—the first time he'd been in saddle in a year—and meet Barclay's ambulance full a thousand yards out from the post, and bade him thrice welcome to the room they had prepared for him, Barclay beamed back his thanks and appreciations, and bade the colonel believe he would never forget his kindness and Mrs. Frazier's, but that he had every possible comfort awaiting him at his own quarters, and could never consent to incommoding Mrs. Frazier or the young ladies. Indeed, the doctor had made other and very different plans for him,—as indeed the doctor had. And Frazier rode back vaguely relieved, yet crestfallen. He knew Barclay and the doctor were right. He knew he himself shrank from such throwing of his daughters at a fellow's head; and then he quailed at the thought of Mrs. Frazier's upbraidings, for she, honest woman, felt it a mother's duty to provide for her precious lambs, the more so because their father was so culpably indifferent, if not shamefully negligent.

A balked and angered woman was Mrs. Frazier at the captain's politely veiled refusal to come and be nursed and captured under her roof. Tartaric acid tinged the smiles of her innocent children the next few days, and if ever there was a time when it behooved Laura Winn to be on her guard and behave with the utmost reserve as regarded her next-door neighbor, it was here and now. She could have read the danger signal in the Fraziers' greeting at parade that very evening, as, most becomingly attired, she strolled languidly down the line at the side of Æsculapius Junior, who, after seeing his patient comfortably stowed in bed, came forth to find her on the piazza, full of sympathetic interest and eager to know what she could do or make or have made in the way of appetizing dainties for the sufferer. Nor did she let him free until he found refuge in the midst of the deeply interested group in front of the colonel's quarters.

This was Tuesday evening, and only Brooks, Blythe, and Brayton were permitted to intrude upon the invalid after the long hours' trundle over the prairie roads. On the morrow the paymaster was to take his ambulance, escort, and emptied safe on the back track to Crockett's, and Barclay was to be allowed to see Mrs. Blythe; but, for the night, rest and quiet were enjoined. In answer to his queries, he was told that the latest news reported Mullane, Winn, and Bralligan scouring the Apache range, while Captain Haight, with forty men, was patrolling towards the Bravo. The post was flush with money. Fuller's bar was doing a rousing business, and Lieutenant Trott, guarding the stores turned over by Winn, was wondering when and in what shape the money value of the stores not turned over was to be paid to him, for the time was past, Winn was far, far away, no package of money had come for him, and Mrs. Winn calmly said it was no affair of hers and she had no knowledge when or by what hand it would be forthcoming. It was conceded at Worth that, in view of the danger in which her husband stood, both afield and at home, more anxiety and less adornment would better have become the lady, as she outshone all other women present when the line of infantry officers broke ranks at dismissal of parade.

CHAPTER XIV.

A WEEK rolled by, a week little Jim Lawrence and other small boys long remembered for the good things they had to eat and drink; and now Galahad was sitting up again at his quarters, doing very well, said both doctors, so well that he could be out on the shaded piazza in a reclining chair, said Brayton,—but wouldn't, said Blythe, —and for good reasons, said the Fraziers feminine, "because then there'd be no dodging Laura Winn, if, indeed, he has succeeded thus far." True, he had not ventured outside his doors, and no one had seen her venture within them. True, Mrs. Frazier, Mrs. Blythe, and other motherly women had been to visit him,—Mrs. Frazier frequently,—and Mrs. Winn had been most particular in her daily inquiries,—"most persistent," said the Frazier girls. Those were days in which milk was a luxury in far-away Texas, but the delicate custards, whips, creams, and what the colonel's Hibernian orderly described as "floating Irelands," which that messenger bore with Mrs. Frazier's love, or Miss Frazier's compliments, or Miss 'Manda Frazier's regards and hopes that the captain was better this morning, could be numbered only by the passing days. What Mrs. Frazier was prepared to see or hear of was similar attention on the part of Mrs. Winn; but Mrs. Winn's attentions took a form more difficult to see, and, even in a frontier, old-time garrison, to hear of.

What Mrs. Frazier was not prepared to see was Mrs. Blythe in frequent confidential chat with the officer whom the colonel's wife chose to consider her own invalid. She had always fancied Mrs. Blythe before, but now she met her with that indescribable tone suggestive of unmerited yet meekly, womanfully borne injury, which is so superior to either explanation or resentment. Mrs. Winn was frequently on her piazza chatting with Mr. Brayton or Dr. "Funnybone," as the wits of the post had designated Collabone's right bower, "who has more brains in one head," said Collabone, "than the mess has in ten;" but she greeted Mrs. Frazier with an austere and distant dignity even more pronounced than Mrs. Frazier's manner to Mrs. Blythe, which plainly showed that Laura had not "been raised in the army for nothing," and that she had a will and temper and pluck that would brook no airs and tolerate no aspersions on Mrs. Frazier's part. Aspersions there had been, for her friend Mrs. Faulkner had not failed in that sisterly duty which so many women so reluctantly yet faithfully perform, and everything Mrs. and the Misses Frazier had even hinted, and some things they even hadn't, were duly conveyed to Laura's ears. She was angered at the Fraziers for daring to say such things, at Mrs. Faulkner for daring to repeat them, and at Barclay for daring to keep her beyond the possibility of their being true. Never before had she known what it was to strive for a look or word of admiration and to meet utter indifference. Yet those blue eyes of Barclay's had once fairly burned with passionate delight in her girlish beauty, and his words had trembled with their weight of love for her. No other woman, she believed, had yet come into his life and banished all memory of her; and, now that her beauty was but the riper for her

years, she rebelled in her soul against the whisper that it could no longer move him.

Wedded though she was to Harry Winn, loving him after the fashion of her shallow nature so long as there was no man at the post from whom she sought to exact homage, she had time and again within the year felt towards her husband a sense of injury. What business had he had to woo her if he was so poor? What right had he to subject her to the annoyance of dunning letters, of suggestive inquiries on the part of her neighbors? Why should she submit to parsimonious skimping and cheese-paring, to living with only one servant when several other women had two, to all the little shifts and meannesses poor Harry had declared to be necessary? It was his business to provide for her needs. Her father had always supported her in style; why couldn't Harry do the same? True, she knew when she married him he had nothing but his pay. He told her everything, but she had never taken thought for the morrow, though she had taken perhaps too much thought of what she should wear or eat or drink. Laura loved the good things of this life, and had been freely indulged throughout her petted girlhood; and now, in the days when every woman seemed turning against her, purse, cellar, and larder were empty and her husband gone on a stupid foray to the mountains. None could say when he would return, or what new sorrow would meet him then. Other men managed to earn money or make money somehow outside their pay. Why should she, whose tastes, she said, were so much more refined, be mated with one who could only spend?

There is a time when many a homely face becomes radiant with a beauty too deep for sallow skin or heavy features to hide, and when a really winsome face becomes well-nigh angelic; but, even as Laura Winn bent over her sleeping child or nestled the unconscious little one in her bosom, the sullen fire of discontent, thwarted ambition, and wounded self-love smouldered in her deep, slumberous eyes. There were hours now when Baby Winn was left to the scant care of the household nurse, while the mother took the air upon the piazza during the day or flitted about from parlor to parlor along the row at night. She was restless, nervous, as all could see. She frequently assailed Brayton with queries for news, always decorously asking first if couriers had come or were expected from the command afield, yet speedily coming back to the real object of her constant thoughts, the now much honored officer, her next-door neighbor. For three days after he was pronounced able to sit up she did not succeed in seeing him at all, though so many other and, it should be explained, much older women did; but that did not abate one whit her determination that he should speedily see her.

Just what her object was she herself could not have told. It was an instinct, an impulse, a whim, perhaps; but he who had been her lover and was rejected had dared to gaze into her face with eyes serene and untroubled, had met her but half-veiled references to old days with polite but positive indifference. She had nothing to ask of him, she told herself; she meant no disloyalty to Harry, no wrong of any kind. Not a bit of it! She had treated Barclay very badly. She had done

him a wrong that was much greater in her own estimation than it was in that of any one of her neighbors, among whom the women, at least, considered the loss of his inamorata a blessing in disguise; but Laura fully believed that Barclay's heart must have been crushed in the depth of his woe, and that it was now her duty to make friends again,—perhaps in some way to console him; not, of course, in any way to which Harry could object, not, of course, in any way to which the post ought to object, but—well, even to herself, as has been said, she could not entirely and satisfactorily explain her motives; it was impossible, therefore, that she could hope to do so to anybody else; and yet she had dared to write to him. It was only a little note, and yet, with all its inconsistencies, it said so much:

"DEAR CAPTAIN BARCLAY,—I cannot tell you my distress at hearing of your again being severely wounded, especially at a time when I had hoped to have you meet and better know my husband, but now in his distressing absence I, who more than any woman at this post am anxious to show my sympathy and sorrow, am practically helpless. Do tell me if there is anything I can do,—though I am sure I can't see what is left for me, with no cook or kitchen, and Mrs. Frazier and the Misses Frazier sending such loads of things. I really envy them and Mrs. Blythe the privilege of their years in going to see you personally, for am I not at least

"Your oldest friend,

"L. W."

This ingenuous note was sent by Hannibal at an hour when the captain was alone, and when, had he been disposed, he might have hobbled to the door and answered in person; but hobble he did not, nor did he answer until after long thought. He received the little missive with surprise, read it without a tremor of hand or lip, but with something of shame and pity that overspread his face like a cloud. Was he only just beginning to know her, after all?

"Pray do not give my scratch a thought," he answered, in writing, late that afternoon, "and believe, my dear Mrs. Winn, that I have every comfort that one can possibly desire. Every one is most kind. I expect to be out with my men in a week, and shall be delighted to take the field and send Mr. Winn back to you forthwith.

"Most sincerely."

And that was how, with polite but positive indifference, he had treated her reference to old times and old friends. Shallow as she was, Laura Winn was deep enough to see that he meant to hold himself far aloof from her. He could hardly have told her more plainly he would have none of her. He had even dared to say it would be a pleasure to go, that he might send her husband back to her arms. And this was the man she once thought she loved, the man who, she believed, adored her and would never outlive the passion of his sorrow at losing her!

Even now the foolish heart of the woman might have accepted its

lesson; but it was time for friends again to come, and, as Laura expressed it, "pry and prod and preach," and that brought on a climax.

Mrs. Faulkner had dropped in and dropped out again, and Laura, who seemed forever going to the porch these days, followed and called her back.

"One thing you said I don't understand," she began, and Mrs. Faulkner's pretty face showed plainly there had been something of a storm.

"I said this, Laura," her friend responded, permitting her to go no further, but turning at the step and looking up into her indignant eyes. "You do yourself injury by showing such concern about Captain Barclay. Everybody says so, and it's all wasted as far as he's concerned. He never notices your messages in any way."

It was galling to feel herself censured or criticised, but Mrs. Winn was becoming used to that. It was worse than galling to be told that her whilom lover now turned from her almost with contempt. She could bear it that they should say that Galahad Barclay was again circling within danger of her fascinations and would speedily find himself powerless to resist. She could not bear it that they should declare him dead to her. The anger ablaze in her eyes and flushing her cheeks was something even Mrs. Faulkner had never seen before. It was as though she had roused some almost tigerish trait. For a moment Laura stood glaring at her visitor, one hand nervously clutching at the balcony rail, the other at the snugly buttoned bodice of her dark gown. At that instant the door of Barclay's quarters opened and the sound of glad voices preceded but a second or two the appearance of feminine drapery at the threshold. Mrs. Brooks came backing into view, chatting volubly with some one still invisible. Mrs. Frazier came sidling after, and then as they reached the open air the deep tones of their invalid host were heard mingling with the lighter, shriller, if not exactly silvery accents of his visitors. One glance they threw towards the young matron at the opposite end of the piazza, and then it seemed as though Mrs. Frazier promptly precipitated herself into the doorway again, as though to block it against Barclay's possible egress. "Determined not to let him see me, nor me him," were the unspoken words that flashed through Laura's thoughts. Some devil of mischief seemed to whisper in her ear, for when Mrs. Faulkner turned again, there stood her hostess holding forth for her inspection a little note addressed to Mrs. H. H. Winn in a hand Mrs. Faulkner recognized at once as Barclay's. With an icy sneer the lady spoke.

"You think he doesn't write. This came only an hour ago."

Not five minutes later Mrs. Frazier turned to Mrs. Faulkner and asked, "What was Laura Winn showing you?—a letter?"

Mrs. Blythe was passing at the moment, Ada Lawrence, a tall, pallid slip of a girl, in her first black dress, walking sadly at her side. Mrs. Faulkner nodded assent to the question, but glanced significantly at the passers-by, on their way seemingly to the house the elders had just left. Mrs. Blythe bowed courteously and smiled, but the smile was one of those half-hearted attempts that seemed to wither instantly at Mrs. Frazier's solemn and distant salutation.

"Now what's that woman taking Ada Lawrence there for?" was Mrs. Frazier's query, the instant the two were out of earshot, and for the moment she forgot the letter and the significant glance in Mrs. Faulkner's eyes. But Mrs. Brooks had not, and no sooner had the door of Barclay's quarters opened and swallowed up the new callers than the major's wife turned back to it.

"You don't mean a letter from—*him?*" she asked, with a nod of the head at Barclay's quarters.

"I didn't mean to say anything about it," said Mrs. Faulkner, with proper hesitation, "but you seem to know as much as I do, and she made no secret of it whatever. Indeed, I don't know that there's anything in it that anybody mightn't see."

"I think she has no business whatever receiving letters now that her husband's away—nor any other time, for that matter," said Mrs. Frazier, hotly; "and I mean to tell her so, and I'm astonished at him."

"For heaven's sake don't tell her I let it out!" exclaimed Mrs. Faulkner. "You've just got to say you saw it away from his door."

"Well, I think the sooner Mr. Harry Winn gets back the better it will be for this garrison, and I'll say so to Colonel Frazier this very night," exclaimed the colonel's wife, bristling with proper indignation. "And he'll come back, if we have to send couriers to order him."

But no courier was needed to summon Lieutenant Winn. Two days later, fast as jaded horse could carry him, followed by a single orderly, he was coming, full of hope and pluck and enthusiasm, the bearer of tidings that meant so much to him, that might be of such weight in the removal of some portion, at least, of the serious stoppages against his pay. Away out in the Apache mountains, where the remnants of the Friday gang seemed to have scattered into little squads of two or three, one party had been trailed and chased to its hole, a wild nook in the rocks, and there in brief, bloody fight two more of the gang bit the dust in reaching that height of outlaw ambition, "dying with their boots on." Others were wounded and captured, and still another, neither wounded nor combatant, but a trembling skulker, was dragged out from a cleft in among the boulders and kicked into the presence of the commanding officer by a burly Irishman who would have lost the bliss of a dozen pay-day sprees rather than that one achievement, for the skulking captive was Marsden, and Marsden was English.

A more abject, pitiable, helpless wretch even Texan troopers had never seen. Imploring his captors to protect him against the illimitable possibilities of lynch law,—for there were veteran soldiers present to whose thinking drum-head court-martial and summary execution were all too good for Marsden,—the ex-sergeant told the story of his stealings, and the names of his accomplices, but declared that all his ill-gotten gains were gone. Every cent he had at the time of his flight was taken from him, he protested, by the gang of desperadoes among whom he had found refuge.

"He's lyin', sorr," declared Sergeant Shaughnessy at this juncture. "He's hidin' the hoith av it somewheres, an' there's nothin' like the

noose av a lariat to frishen his mimory." But old Mullane ordered silence.

"Go you back to Worth fast as you can," said he to Winn. "Write the report for me to sign before you start. Tell the colonel where what is left of the stolen property can be found, and we'll bring Marsden along with us. The quicker you get there the more you can save."

Worth was one hundred and fifty miles away on a bee-line, and Winn had to twist and turn, but he rode with buoyant heart. By prompt measures much of his misfortune might be wiped out. Then, with the proffered loan with which to settle his accounts and pay off certain pressing creditors, he could start afresh, his head at last above the waters that had weighed him down. He would lead a simple, inexpensive life, and Laura would have to help him. He could set aside one-fourth, or even, perhaps, one-third, of his pay to send each month to the bank at San Antonio. It would be hard, but at least he would be honest and manful, and Laura would have to try to dress and live inexpensively. She used to say she would rather share exile and poverty with him than a palace with any other man, but that seemed a bit like hyperbole in the light of her subsequent career. Long before this, he said, the bank would have sent the money to Worth. It was doubtless now awaiting him in Fuller's safe, or possibly Trott's. How blessed a thing it was that the cashier should have been an old and warm friend of his father,—that he should have written proffering aid for old times' sake to the son of the soldier he had known and been aided by and had learned to love in bygone days! It was odd that Mr. Cashier Bolton had not made himself known to him, Harry Winn, when he and his lovely bride were in San Antonio, but all the more was the offer appreciated. It was odd that he should couple with the offer a condition that Winn should give his word not to tell the name of his father's friend and his own benefactor, and further to agree neither to drink nor bet a cent on any game of chance until the money was repaid. He was not given to drinking, but he had heard of a fondness on his father's part for cards, and had felt the fascination himself. All right: he would promise gladly.

They got fresh horses at a midway camp where a small detachment guarded the Cougar Springs, rested during the hot hours of the first day after a long night ride, then set forth, chasing their long shadows in the late afternoon, and, riding on through the night, hove in sight of the twinkling lights in the company kitchens at Worth just as the dawn was spreading over the eastward prairie. At the guard-house, aroused by the sentry's warning, a sergeant tumbled off his bench and ran sleepily out to meet them. It was a man whom Winn had frequently seen hovering about his quarters in attendance upon their maid-of-all-work.

"All well at home, Quigley?" he queried, hopefully.

"All well, sir; leastwise Mrs. Winn and the baby is, so Miss Purdy said yesterday evenin'. Mrs. Blythe with her children and Colonel Lawrence's have gone to San Antonio. They're all goin' home together. Any luck, sir?"

"I should say so! Hit 'em hard twice, and caught Marsden alive."

"Great—— Beg pardon, lieutenant, but that's the best news yet!" The soldier's eyes danced and pleaded for more, but Winn was eager to reach his home, to tiptoe up to Laura's room, to kneel by the bedside and fold her, waking, in his strong, yearning arms, to bend and kiss his baby's sleeping face. He spurred on across the parade. The long, low line of officers' quarters lay black and unrelieved against the reddening sky. Only in one or two were faint night-lights burning, one down near the southern end, the room of the officer of the day, another in his own. The slats of the blinds, half turned, revealed the glimmer of a lamp within. Probably baby was awake and demanding entertainment, and there could be no surprising Laura as he had planned. Still, he guided his horse so as to avoid pebbles or anything that would click against the shod hoofs. The home-coming would be the sweeter for its being unheralded.

"Never mind the saddle-bags now," he murmured to his orderly. "Take the horses to stables, and bring the traps over by and by." Then he tiptoed around to the back of the house. The front door, he knew, would be locked; so would that opening on the little gallery in rear; but there was the window of his den; he could easily raise it from outside and let himself in without any one's being the wiser. A glance at his watch showed him that in ten minutes the morning gun would fire and the post wake up to the shrill reveille of the infantry fifes and drums. Even though Laura should be awake and up with her baby, the surprise might be attempted. The back porch was lighted up with the glow from the east. The back door of the Barclay-Brayton establishment was ajar, and some one was moving about in the kitchen,—Hannibal, probably, getting coffee for his master in time for morning stables. Just to try it, Winn tiptoed up the low steps to the rear door, and there it stood, not wide open, but just ajar. "Miss Purdy" had mended her ways, then, and was rising betimes, he said. Softly entering, he passed through the little kitchen into the dark dining-room beyond, felt his way through into his deserted den to the left,—the blinds were tightly closed,—thence to the narrow hall, and up the carpeted, creaking stairs. The door of the back room at the east, the nursery, was right at the landing. The light of the dawn was strong enough to reveal dimly objects within. That door, too, was wide open, and there by the bedside was the cradle of his baby, and the little one placidly asleep. There in her bed, innocent of the possibility of masculine observation, her ears closed, her mouth wide open in the stupor of sleep, lay the domestic combination of nurse and maid-of-all-work. He tiptoed past the door and softly approached that of the front, the westward room,—his and Laura's. It, too, was partly open. A lamp burned dimly on the bureau. The broad, white bed, with its tumbled pillows and tossed-back coverlet, was empty, as he found the room to be. Laura, then, and not the maid, was the early riser. Softly he searched about the upper floor. She had heard him, after all, and was hiding somewhere to tease him. No; there on the back of her rocking-chair hung the pink, beribboned wrapper that was so becoming to her, and on another the dainty, lace-trimmed night-robe. She must be up and dressed,—his languid, lazy Laura,

who rarely rose before nine o'clock, as a rule, and now it was only five. A strange throbbing began at his heart. Quickly he turned and scurried down the stairs, struck a match in the parlor, another in the dining-room. Both were empty. The den and its closets were explored. No one there.

Out he went through the kitchen to the eastward porch again. The light was stronger. Over the level *mesa* to the edge of the bluff, not fifty yards away, his eager eyes swept in search of the truant form. There stood at the very brow of the projecting point at the northeast side a little, latticed summer-house where sentimental couples sometimes sat and looked over the shallow valley of moonlight nights; and there, close beside it, switching the skirt of her stylish riding-habit with her whip, stood Laura Winn. Just as she turned and glanced impatiently over her shoulder, out from the adjoining door came a soldierly form in riding-dress. For an instant three forms seemed to stand stock-still; then came the shock and roar of the reveille gun, and before the echoes rolled away Lieutenant Winn, striding up to Barclay with fury in his eyes, struck the captain full in the face and sent him crashing over a kitchen chair.

CHAPTER XV.

Ten miles out to the northwest the stream that curved and twisted around the low *mesa* of Fort Worth burst its way through a ridge in the foot-hills, and, brawling and dashing at its rocky banks, rolled out over the lowlands, foaming at the mouth with the violence of its own struggles. Far in the heart of the hills it had its source in several clear, cold springs, while the deep hoarded snows of the harsh winters fed and swelled it in the springtide until it reached the proportions of a short-lived torrent. Huge heaps of uprooted trees and tangled brushwood it deposited along its shores as far down even as the fort, but nothing was carried below the sutler's. "Ahl's fish that comes to Fuller's net," said Sergeant McHugh, "an' sorra a sliver av a sardine iver got away from it." Once in a while, after unusual flood, the flotsam and jetsam of the creek would be diversified with wagon-bodies, ranch roofs, camp equipage, and the like, for "the Range," as this odd upheaval was locally termed, was a famous place for prospectors.

A beautiful stream was the Blanca within its mountain gates, but an ashen pallor overspread it after its fight for freedom. It was never the same stream after it got away. It danced and sparkled past pretty nooks and shaded ravines among the hills, but issued from the gateway, like the far-famed Stinking River of the Bannocks and Shoshones of Northwestern Wyoming, a metamorphosed stream. It had a bad reputation. It was solely responsible for the fact that Worth had been located away out here in the bald, bleak, open prairie country, instead of among those bold and beautiful heights to the northwest. "The very spot for a military post!" said the officers of the earlier scouting parties, as they camped within the gates in the midst of a

lonely glade. "Lovely," said the Texan guides, in reply, "so long as you don't mind being drowned out every spring." It seems that snows would melt of a sudden, tremendous thunderstorms burst among the crags, and flood and deluge the valleys, for the Blanca could not with sufficient swiftness discharge its swollen torrents through that narrow gorge. Beautiful it lay, ordinarily, as a summer sea, and the bridle-path that wound through the pass was a favorite route for picnic-parties from Worth. But storm-clouds would rise and turn summer seas to raging water-demons, and then the flood that tore through the gates would sweep all before it, like the unloosed waters of the Conemaugh that awful May of '89.

From Worth to the White Gate the prairie road wound hard and firm, and before the late excitement several picnic-, riding-, and driving-parties had paid their spring-time visits. It was quite the thing, too, for such maids and matrons as were good horsewomen to ride thither in the lengthening afternoons. Mrs. Frazier had consulted Collabone as to the earliest date on which Barclay could stand a long drive, as she wished to give a little *fête* in his honor, and had planned a picnic to Barrier Rock, a romantic spot just within the gorge. Collabone had referred her to his assistant, and that younger officer consulted his patient before committing himself to reply.

"I don't care to ride in an ambulance, doctor, but I do long to get in saddle. There's no strain on that leg below the knee. Can't you let me mount from my back porch here and amble around these fine mornings before people are up?" And "Funnybone" assented. He and Barclay rode out together, very cautiously, next morning at reveille, and, finding his patient benefited by the gentle exercise on such a perfect mount as either of those Kentucky bays, the doctor said, "Go again; only ride slowly, and mount and dismount only at the back porch, where you have only to lower yourself into saddle. Be sure to avoid any shock or jar, then you're all right."

Hannibal and Mrs. Winn's domestic were the only persons besides Barclay's orderly to see the start, but had the domestic herself been alone it would have been sufficient to insure transmission of the news. First she told her mistress. Later she learned from Hannibal that the captain was going out to stables next morning the same way, and had ordered coffee to be ready at reveille. This, too, was conveyed to Laura, and that evening she sent for the veteran stable sergeant of the troop to which her husband was temporarily attached, and asked him if Robin Hood, a pretty little chestnut she used to ride, was still in the stable. He was, and would Mrs. Winn be pleased to ride? The sergeant would be glad to see the lady in saddle again. Her handsome side-saddle was, with her bridle, always kept in perfect order, but for several months Mrs. Winn had taken no exercise that way.

"I'm going to ride at reveille, sergeant," she confided to the faithful soldier. "It's so long since I mounted, I wish to try once or twice when people can't see me." And Sergeant Burns had promised that as soon as the sentry would release him after gun-fire Robin Hood should be on hand. He'd be proud to come with him himself.

True to his word, Burns was up at four-fifteen; Robin was groomed

and fed and watered and saddled in style, and ready to start the moment the sentry was relieved by the morning gun-fire from the imposition of the order to "allow no horse to be taken out between taps and reveille, except in the presence of a commissioned officer or the sergeant of the guard." The sight that met the sergeant's eyes as he cantered around back of the row of officers' quarters, leading Robin by the rein, was one he never forgot.

With pallid face, down which the blood was streaming from a cut at the temple, Captain Barclay was seated on the steps, striving to bind a handkerchief about his lower leg. Old Hannibal, forgetful of the dignity of the Old Dominion, was actually running down the back road, in haste, it seems, to summon the doctor. On the porch, amid some overturned chairs, two athletic, sinewy young men were grappling, one of them, Lieutenant Brayton, almost lifting and carrying the other, Lieutenant Winn, towards his own doorway, both ashen gray as to their faces, both fearfully excited, both struggling hard, both with panting breath striving to speak with exaggerated calm.

On this scene, wringing her hands, sobbing with fright and misery, flitting first to Barclay's side, then back towards her straining husband, saying wild and incoherent things to both, was Laura Winn. Burns had the frontiersman's contempt for a chimney-pot hat, and never seemed one so incongruous as this,—her riding head-gear which in the midst of her wailings Mrs. Winn clasped to her heaving breast. To make matters more complicated, the neighborhood was waking up, domestics and "strikers" were gazing from back porches farther down the row, and Blythe's big hounds had taken to barking furiously, until that bulky and bewildered soldier himself came forth, damned them into their kennel, then hastened in consternation to the aid of Barclay. By this time, too, Winn had succeeded in making his wife hear him, and was ordering her within-doors; but like some daft creature she hovered, moaning and wringing her hands and staring at Barclay, whose eyes were now beginning to close, and whose form was slowly swaying.

"In God's name, man, what's happened?" demanded Blythe, as he seized and steadied the toppling form. "Why, you're bleeding like an ox. Your boot is running over.—Drop those horses, Burns, and run for the doctor, lively," he urged. Needing no further authority, the sergeant turned his chargers loose and scurried after Hannibal.

"Help me carry Barclay in-doors," was the next word. With one warning order to Winn to keep away, young Brayton broke loose from him and ran to assist. As though half stupefied, Winn heavily moved a pace or two, then sank upon a bench and stared. His wife stood gazing in horror at the trail of blood that followed the three men into the hall, then faltered over to where the young soldier sat, moaning, "Oh, Harry! Oh, Harry!" Reaching his side, she laid her hand upon his shoulder and bade him look at her,—speak to her. He rose slowly to his feet, his face averted, shook himself free, and, with a shudder, but never uttering a word in reply, passed into his dark doorway. The nurse-girl, wide-eyed, met him at the threshold. "Go to your mistress," he said, hoarsely. He stumbled on through the house,

unslung the revolver belted to his waist, and laid it on the hall table; reconsidered; buckled it firmly on, and, pulling his hat down over his eyes, drew back the door-bolt and let himself out upon the front piazza. Crossing the parade, he saw the red sash of the officer of the day. De Lancy was dragging sleepily back from his reveille visit to the guard, but the sight of Winn aroused him, and he quickened his pace and came striding to him.

"Hullo, lad," he hailed, full twenty paces away, "what luck? Got Marsden, the sergeant tells me.—Why—— Good God! what's happened?"

"Nothing," said Winn, "except, perhaps, I've killed Barclay. Take me to the colonel."

"You're daft, man!" said De Lancy, instantly, while an awful fear almost checked the beating of his heart. Then, seizing Winn by the arm, "What d'ye mean?" he asked.

"Go and see," said Winn, stupidly, as he buried his face in his arms a moment, then stretched them out full length, and, tossing his head back, shut his eyes as though to blot out a hateful sight. "Go," he continued; "then come and take me to the colonel."

And De Lancy started on the run and collided with Brayton at the door.

"For God's sake, go and hurry up 'Funnybone,'" moaned the youngster. "Here's Barclay bleeding to death."

De Lancy ran his best: guardsmen across the parade stopped and stared, men in shirt-sleeves rushed out on the barrack stoops and stood and gazed, and a corporal, with rifle trailed, came running over to see what was amiss, just as the junior doctor, in cap and overcoat, trousers and slippers, came bolting out of his hallway and flying up the path. In front of De Lancy's one slipper went hurtling back through mid-air, but the doctor rushed on in stocking-foot. The corporal picked up the shoe and followed. No one seemed to look for the moment at Winn, who turned slowly back to the pathway and like a blind man seemed groping his way towards Frazier's. The officer of the day passed him by on the run, following at the doctor's heels, with never another look at him. Men seemed to think only of Barclay. Was it credible that an officer and a gentleman, as Winn had been regarded, could purposely have dealt that honored soldier a mortal blow, unless —unless—but who could find words to frame the thought? Once within Brayton's hallway, De Lancy turned and slammed shut the door, for others were coming on the run from far across the parade. Over at the guard-house the men had started for their breakfast, but hung there, clustered about the sentry-post, gazing over the criss-cross plat of the parade, and muttering their conjectures as to the cause of the trouble. The sight of Lieutenant Winn wandering on down the row, turning from time to time, halting as though uncertain what he ought to do, while every other officer was running to the other end of the row, was something they could not understand.

Then Mrs. Winn, in riding-habit, came suddenly forth upon her piazza, and, gazing wildly up and down, caught sight of her husband, now some fifty paces away along the gravel walk. Stretching forth

her arms to him, she began to call aloud, "Harry! Harry! please come back!" He never turned. She ran down the steps and out to the gate and called him, louder, louder, so that they could hear the voice all over the garrison in the sweet, still morning air; but on he went, doggedly now, faster and faster. She gathered up her clinging skirts in one hand, and, pleading still, followed after. Not until he had mounted the steps at the colonel's did the young officer turn again; then with uplifted hand and arm he stood warning her back. Something in the attitude, something in the stern, quivering white face, seemed at last to bring to her the realization of the force of his unspoken denunciation.

"Harry! Harry!" she cried. "Oh, come and let me tell you. You don't understand! I meant no wrong! I was only going for a ride,—not with him,—not with him, Harry!" And so, pleading, weeping, she followed almost to the colonel's gate before the door was opened from within and Winn was swallowed up in the darkness of the hall.

By this time some inkling of the trouble had been borne to Collabone, ever an early riser. As he came hastily forth from his quarters, the first thing he saw was the drooping form of Mrs. Winn, weeping at the colonel's gate. Seizing her arm with scant ceremony, he whirled her about and bore her homeward, she sobbing out her story as they sped along, he listening with clouded, anxious face.

"Go back to your room, Mrs. Winn," he said, so solemnly and warningly she could not but heed. "Go to your baby. I'll go first next door, then I'll find your husband." She shrank within the hallway, and threw herself, weeping miserably, upon the sofa in the pretty parlor,—the parlor where she had so fascinated Hodge. There the sound of her baby's wailing reached her in an interval of her own, and she called to the nurse to do something to comfort that child. There was no answer. "Miss Purdy," with clattering tongue and eager eyes and ears and half a dozen sympathizing neighbors, was out in rear of the house, deaf to demands of either mother or child; there Collabone found her, and sent her scurrying within before the fury of his wrath.

"Now, this will not do, Mrs. Winn," he said, as, following, he lifted the moaning woman from the sofa. "You must go to your room,—to your child, as I told you. Captain Barclay will soon be all right. He has lost much blood, but the hemorrhage is checked. Now I will go for Mr. Winn. It's a bad business, but don't make it worse by any more—nonsense." With that he not too gently pushed her up the first few stairs, then turned abruptly and hastened away to Frazier's.

In the hall he found that gray-haired, gray-faced veteran listening stupidly to Winn.

"I don't understand, sir," he was saying. "You struck him—with what?"

"I don't know," said Winn. "They say I've killed him. I have come to surrender myself." His eyes were as dull and leaden as his heart.

"It's not so bad," burst in the doctor. "Barclay fell or was knocked over a chair, and the jar reopened his wound. He fainted from loss of blood, but it's checked now."

"But—how?—why?" the colonel was stammering. Over the balustrade aloft popped one head night-capped, and two with touseled hair, and blanched faces were framed in all three, and gasping words were heard, and whisperings as of awe-stricken, news-craving souls. "Where did this occur, and when did you return, sir?"

"On the back porch of my—of our quarters, colonel,—when I got back, just before gun-fire."

"And what possible excuse or explanation have you, sir? What could warrant such—such conduct?" demanded Frazier, as though at a loss for suitable words. Yet, even as he asked, his wife's predictions reasserted themselves, and he glanced uneasily aloft.

"Come into the parlor, colonel," implored Collabone. "Say no more here. Let me explain. It's all a wretched mistake." And, half pushing, half pulling, but all impelling, the doctor succeeded in hustling the post commander and the inert, unresisting subaltern within the parlor. Then, to the infinite disgust of the colonel's wife, he shut —yes, slammed—the door.

A quarter of an hour later, in close arrest, Lieutenant Winn returned to his own roof and locked himself in his den. Mrs. Winn, kneeling at the keyhole, pleaded ten minutes for admission, all in vain; then she sent her maid for Dr. Collabone and Mrs. Faulkner, and went straightway to bed.

CHAPTER XVI.

THREE days more, and back came Mullane with the wretched prisoner Marsden. The Irish captain's eyes grew saucer-big when he heard the harrowing details of recent events at the post. Never in its liveliest days, before or since, had Worth known an excitement to match this; for, with the best intentions in the world, there wasn't a woman in officers' row who could get at the bottom facts of the episode. Rumors of the wildest kind that were early in circulation were best left to the imagination of the reader. The only thing actually known was that Mrs. Winn and Captain Barclay were going out riding at reveille, that Winn surprised them and knocked the captain down, that Winn was now in close arrest, Barclay on the mend and again sitting up, Mrs. Winn confined by illness to her bed, Mrs. Faulkner (a most important person she) in devoted attendance, all their differences forgiven if not forgotten,—and there were few Mrs. Faulkner would not have forgiven for the bliss of being for the time the most sought-after woman at Worth, for every one wanted to know how Mrs. Winn was every hour of the day, and hoped to hear what dreadful imprudence of hers it was that caused the equally dreadful fracas.

Gravely and quietly the doctors told their story to the colonel; that there was no arrangement or engagement to ride together; that Captain Barclay had no idea Mrs. Winn ever rose—much less rode—that

early; and most men accepted the statement as true. But there was the fatal exhibition of Barclay's letter by Mrs. Winn to confront the women, who would have held him guiltless and saddled all the blame upon her lovely, sloping shoulders. What had he to write to her about, unless it was to ask her to ride or something of the kind? And the idea of their daring to select such an hour, instead of going out when —when people could see! And then there was the fact that Mr. Winn still refused to be reconciled to his wife. What did that mean, if not that he deemed her guilty? Blythe, who had a kindlier feeling for Winn than had most men at Worth (for Brayton now was utterly set against him and refused to go near him), sent in his card and begged to be allowed to see him; and Blythe's face was sad and gray when, half an hour later, he came forth again.

"Colonel," said he to Frazier, "something has got to be done for that poor fellow, or he'll go mad. Collabone has told him Barclay was totally ignorant of Mrs. Winn's plan to ride that morning,—that his assault was utterly unjustifiable; and between that and the contemplation of his wife's brainless freak, and all his old trouble, I'm sorely afraid he'll break down,—go all to pieces. Can't something be done?"

Both Frazier and Brooks thought something ought to be done; and so said Blythe and De Lancy, and Follansbee and Fellows, when they came trooping home, empty-handed, from their scout. Only Mullane's detachment had accomplished anything, and such success as he had was due almost entirely to Winn's persistent effort and energetic trailing. Something was being done to hunt up stolen stores as revealed by Marsden, but poor Winn, who had ridden home so full of hope and pluck and energy, now paced his narrow room for hours, or lay upon his lounge, face buried in his arms, either dull and apathetic or smarting with agony. On Mrs. Winn old Collabone had little sympathy to waste. Bluntly he told her that she was responsible for the whole business and deserved to be down sick. So, too, he told the colonel, who was having a blissful time answering the questions and squirming under the nagging of his household at home. At first Laura had shown tremendous spirit. Mr. Winn's conduct was an insult. The doctor's comments were an insult. The instant she was well enough to move she would take her precious child and return to her mother's roof.

"Your mother hasn't any roof," said Collabone. "She's boarding in Washington, playing for another husband, and you'd spoil the whole game, turning up with a grandchild. What you've got to do is beg your husband's pardon for all the scrapes you've led him into,—this last one especially." Laura wailed and wept and cried out against the heartless cruelty of her husband, who left her sick and dying, for all he knew (Collabone had assured him there was nothing on earth the matter but nerves), and she thought Mrs. Faulkner ought to *make* him hear how ill she was. At last she managed to have herself appropriately arrayed, and with face of meekest suffering waylaid him on the lower floor before he could close the door against her, after a brief official visit from the adjutant.

But the first glance into his haggard, hopeless face, the sight of

despair such as she had never dreamed of, struck to her soul something like terror. One moment she gazed, all thought of her puny troubles vanished and forgotten, and then with one great cry—the first genuine feeling she had shown—the unhappy woman threw herself at his feet and clasped her arms about his trembling knees.

That night when the doctor called he found her humbled, contrite, concerned in earnest, and all for her husband. "It's the first time," said he, "I've ever felt any respect for you whatever, Mrs. Winn. I believe there's something in you, after all,"—"though probably not much," he later added when he told his wife. That night, too, he and Brooks and Blythe sat half an hour with Winn. The colonel asked it, for it was time to help him if help was to come at all. That day brought inquiry from Department Head-Quarters as to whether Lieutenant Winn had made good the amount of that great shortage; and the promised money package had not come.

Gently they asked him if he had reasonable right to look for it, and all the answer he could make was that it had been promised on certain conditions. He had recently accepted them, had expected to find the money on his arrival at Worth, but instead had found—— and the hands thrown hopelessly forward, palms upraised, were as expressive as any words could have been. There was silence a moment. Then he spoke again.

"And, after all, what matters it now? With this court-martial hanging over me, I've nothing but dismissal to look forward to in any event."

"And what if there should be no trial, Winn?" said the major, after a reflective pause. "It is true that you have made an awful—break; but as yet you are your only accuser, and Mrs. Winn is the only witness, for Barclay is dumb."

But Winn shook his head. "I know enough of army matters to know that this thing is all over the post and will soon be all over Texas. If Captain Barclay was of—the old army,—if he had been brought up as I was, we might settle it out of court. My father used to say that there could be no other reparation for a blow. What would my apologies be worth? They would not re-establish him."

"Sometimes I think," said Brooks, after another reflective pause, "that men of Barclay's stamp need no appeal to the code to set them right. That is only a device by which physical courage is made a substitute for other virtues that may be lacking. Barclay occupies a plane above it. In view of his record in the Platte country and in this recent chase after the outlaws, it would take a bold man to sneer at him, in this garrison at least; and if he prefer no charge against you, who is to do it? This trouble can be straightened out, Winn," said the major, soothingly, "if only you could fix—that other."

But how, said they to each other, as they went gloomily away, was that other to be "fixed"? How was a poor fellow with nothing but his pay, burdened by an extravagant and helpless wife, a little child, and a number of debts, to hope to raise three thousand dollars to prevent the almost total stoppage of his stipend? That evening when Mrs. Faulkner left her invalid friend the latter asked her to say to

Harry that she begged him to come and speak with her. Harry went, but there was no spring, no gladness, in the slow and halting feet that climbed the narrow stair; there was no hope in the care-worn face that came forth again in half an hour. Laura wished him to take her watch, her diamond ear-rings, a locket he had given her in bygone days, and other pretty trinkets, sell them, and pay their debts: she was amazed to hear, not that they owed so much, but that her treasures would bring so little.

The fourth day of his arrest was well-nigh gone. Collabone had reported Barclay quite himself again, and sitting up, though none too strong, and then he saw that Winn at last had been writing. "Read that," said Harry, briefly, and handed him the sheet. It was addressed to Captain Barclay.

"In the last four days I have done nothing but think of the great wrong I did you. I have tried to find words in which to tell you my distress and self-reproach, but they fail me. There was no shadow of justification for my suspicion, and therefore no excuse for my blow. Had you desired reparation you would have demanded it, and the rule used to be for a man in my plight to wait until it was asked before he tendered an apology that might be considered a stopper to a challenge. But I will not wait. At the risk of anything any man may say or think, I write this to tell you that I deplore my conduct and with all my heart to beg your pardon."

Collabone went through it twice with blinking eyes. "That's the bravest thing you ever did, Winn," said he, as he laid it carefully down. "That ought to stop court-martial proceedings."

"That," answered Winn, "is a different matter. I don't ask any mercy. I would have been better off this minute if he or Brayton had shot me on the spot."

There was silence a moment as he turned away and presently seated himself at the little table, his head dropping forward on his arms. Then Collabone stepped up and placed a hand upon his shoulder.

"Winn, my boy, I should lie if I said you ought not to feel this, but there's such a thing as brooding too much. You'll harm yourself if you go on like this. You—— Here! let me take that in to Barclay. Let him speak for me; I'm damned if it isn't too much for me!"

But Winn's head was never lifted as the doctor went his way.

Later that night the post adjutant dropped in. He and Winn had never been on cordial terms, but the staff officer was shocked and troubled at the increasing ravages in the once proud and handsome face of the cavalryman. "Winn," he said, in courteous tone, "the colonel directs extension of your limits to include the parade, and—and to visit Captain Barclay, who wants to see you this evening, if you feel able. It's only next door, you know," he added, vaguely. Then, "Isn't there anything I can do?"

That night just after taps old Hannibal admitted the tall young officer, and ushered him into a brightly lighted room, where, rather pale and wan, but with a kindly smile on his face, Galahad Barclay lay back in his reclining chair, and held out a thin, white hand.

"Welcome, Winn," was all he said, and then the old negro slid out and closed the door.

"There are Oirish and Oirish," as, quoting Mulvaney, has been said before. Once assured that no further proceedings were to be taken against him for his iniquitous lapse the day of the rush to Crockett Springs, Captain Mullane concluded that he must stand high in favor at court and that further self-denial and abstinence were uncalled for, especially in view of the successes achieved for him by the small detachment of his party led by Lieutenant Winn. Mullane was a gallant soldier in the field, from sheer love of fighting, and the same trait when warmed by whiskey made him a nuisance in garrison. Not a week was he home from his successful scout when he broke out in a new place, and this time he found instant accommodation.

Little of the stolen property was recovered by the searching squad sent out as the result of Marsden's revelations. That voluble scoundrel was in the guard-house, awaiting trial by general court-martial. Cavalry drills were resumed again, and after each morning's work the officers gathered in considerable force at the club-room. There had been, both in the infantry and in the cavalry, vast speculation as to the outcome of Winn's arrest and Barclay's mishap. But men, as a rule, spoke of the matter with bated breath. Mullane, Bralligan, and the one or two Irish ex-sergeants in the command, known locally as the Faugh-a-Ballaghs, however, waxed hilariously insolent in their comments. Nothing short of dismissal should be Winn's sentence, and nothing short of a challenge be Barclay's course. It was with something akin to amaze that Mullane received on the sixth day after Winn's arrest official notification of his release and restoration to duty. It was with something akin to incredulous wrath that an hour later he caught sight of the liberated lieutenant issuing from Barclay's quarters, not his own, and with Barclay leaning trustfully on his arm.

Apology accepted! Explanations tendered! All settled, and without a meeting on the field of honor! "Whurroo! but hwat's the cavalry comin' to?" howled Mullane over the consequent cups at the sutler's store and club-room, Fuller aiding and abetting with more liquor. Up the hill to the post lurched the big captain that very afternoon, and into the card-room where some of his cronies were gathered, Bralligan among them, and the untrustworthy Hodge. Any one with half an eye could see there was mischief in the wind, for nothing caused these old-time Hibernian rankers keener suffering than to have their betters settle a question without either court-martial or a fight. Talk and jeering laugh grew louder as potations followed on the heel-taps of their predecessors. The mail from San Antonio got in at five P.M. that evening, and the orderly was distributing letters as the officers returned from stables. Winn, by invitation, had accompanied the major, and was walking home with him, Mullane and a crony or two following at safe distance. Several men saw the light of relief in Winn's face as he received, opened, and glanced into the missive handed him.

"Has it come?" asked Brooks, in genuine sympathy.

"Yes," answered Winn, almost solemnly. "A check which I am instructed to have cashed by Fuller, as he has all the currency in the county just now."

"I congratulate you with all my heart," said the major. "I suppose you will see Trott to-morrow."

"I shall see him to-night, if you will excuse me, sir. I'll go at once to the store.—Brayton, will you come with me?"

Fuller was out. It was some minutes before he could be found at the corral. Meantime the two classmates, reconciled since the long talk between Barclay and Winn, conversed in low, grave tones in Fuller's private card-room, where none but officers and his cronies were admitted. "The trader looked queer," said Brayton, "when he took the check," but after some fumbling at his safe came back with a thick package of treasury notes, carefully counted out and labelled. On this display of wealth gloated the fishy eyes of Mullane as a moment later he came reeling in, Bralligan and Hodge at his heels.

To his hilarious salutation Brayton gave short answer, Winn none at all. Winn's face had clouded again, and all the sad lines of thought and care seemed cutting deep, despite the coming of this much-needed relief.

"Hwat's ahl the lucre, I say?" shouted the Irish captain, raging at Winn's tacit snub. "Thousands of dollars, bedad!" Then with leering wink he turned to his half-muddled satellites. "D'ye mind, lads?—ahl that for a plasther to wounded honor,—regular John Bull business over again. That's the English way of settlin' a crim. con. case. How much did Barclay think it wurrth, Winn?"

And the next instant he lay floundering on the floor, felled by a furious blow from the subaltern's fist.

CHAPTER XVII.

Another week opened. In honor of Captain Barclay's restoration to health, the Fraziers had issued invitations for a picnic to the White Gate. Many of the officers and ladies had accepted. Most of them had been bidden. Captain Mullane had been on sick report four days,—contusions resulting from tumbling from a broken-legged chair, was the explanation; but every Pat in the command had his tongue in his cheek when he spoke of it, and of matters growing out of the "contusions" mentioned. Frazier had heard rumors of the former fracas, and had notified Messrs. Mullane, Bralligan, *et al.* that he would have no duelling in his bailiwick; and deep was the mystery surrounding certain consultations held by night in Mullane's quarters.

"The blood of that young braggart be on his own head," said Mullane to his henchmen. "And you, Hodge, can console the disconsolate widow."

He had no more doubt of the issue of the contemplated combat, no more compunction in the matter, than had Thackeray's valiant and inimitable little Gascon, *né* Cabasse, in his duel with Lord Kew. He

had long been the leader of the Hibernian set, and, despite every effort on the part of the witnesses to the affray at the sutler's to keep the matter a secret, rumors got out, and the Faugh-a-Ballaghs knew their chief had been braved by that hated coxcomb Winn. Every one of them knew further that Mullane must have sent his demand for satisfaction, despite the fact that his "pistol oi," the right, had been damaged by the collision and was not yet in condition for effective service. Everybody who was in the secret knew that Mr. Winn had instantly accepted, naming Brayton as his second, pistols as the weapons, and suggesting his father's old duelling set, that had seen long years and some service in the old army, as proper to the occasion; the time and place, however, would necessarily depend on the victim of the knock-down blow. All Winn asked and urged was utter secrecy meantime.

To Mullane there was nothing in the episode over which to brood or worry. As dragoon sergeant in the old days, he had "winged his man" according to the methods described in "Charles O'Malley" and practised occasionally by his superiors in rank. He had known many a bar-room broil, and was at home with pistol, fists, or sabre,—no mean antagonist when not unsteadied by liquor. He had now a chance of meeting on the field one of the set he secretly hated, "the snobocracy of the arrumy," and he meant to shoot the life out of Harry Winn if straight shooting would do it. That Winn had taken advantage of him and knocked him down when he was drunk was excuse sufficient for the crime he planned; that he had brought the blow upon himself by an insult ten times more brutal was a matter that concerned him not at all. He had no wife or child to worry about: Mrs. Mullane and the various progeny were old enough to look out for themselves, as indeed most of them had long been accustomed to do. Mullane thirsted for the coming meeting, and for the prominence its outcome would give him among all good soldiers all over Texas.

And as for Winn,—he who had come riding home from his successful scout barely a fortnight before, buoyant, hopeful, almost happy,—the change that had come over him was something all men saw and none could fully account for. Cashing the draft from the bank at San Antonio, he had now enough to take Trott's receipt in full for the value of the stolen stores, even to some recovered plunder, slightly damaged by rough handling and by rain. He would then still have some four hundred dollars, and he asked his wife for certain bills that had been frequently coming to her accompanied by urgent demands. Laura said she had not kept them. Which ought to be paid first? he asked. Which had been longest outstanding? Laura's reply was that she did not know, but if he had got that money from San Antonio at last she ought to have some to send to Madame Chalmette. She positively had not a dinner-dress fit to be seen. Winn did not even glance at the open doors of a big closet, hung thick with costly gowns his wife had hardly worn at all, but that now, she said, were out of style. There were other matters to be thought of than dinner-gowns, he told her, gravely, and her face clouded at once. She had almost forgotten the troubles of the week gone by.

He went down to his den and sat there thinking. What ought he to do? what should he do with this money? Every cent of it would be swallowed up if he squared those commissary accounts and turned the balance into checks and sent it off to pay these bills, and then if Mullane's bullet sped true to its mark, what would there be to take Laura and the baby North? "Home" he dared not say. She had no home: Collabone's diagnosis of that situation was correct. Then, too, if Mullane's pistol did not fail him, there would be no way in which that mysterious friend and beneficiary of his father's could ever be repaid. What right had he to use one cent of this money for any purpose whatever, when another day might be his last? Winn wished he still had the San Antonio check instead of these bulky packages of greenbacks. They were now locked up in Trott's safe, unbroken, pending action at Department Head-Quarters on the new schedule sent thither, based on the recovery of some of the damaged stores. He thought of it all as, long before gun-fire that morning, the black care of his life came and roused him from his fitful sleep and bade him face his daily, hourly torment. He had risen, and as he softly moved about the room, thoughtful for her, she slept on placidly as a happy child, soundly as slept the nurse and the little one in the adjoining room.

Donning his stable dress, he carried his boots into the hall and down the creaking stairs, and sat there, with solitary candle, at his desk, wearily jotting down inexorable figures. The dawn came stealing in the eastward window: from aloft a querulous little wail was uplifted on the stillness of the summer morning. There was no answering hush of loving, motherly voice. Laura could not stand wakeful nights. He tiptoed swiftly up again to rouse the nurse in case she too slept on, but he heard her hand beating drowsy time on the coverlet, and the soothing "Shoo, shoo, shoo," with which she communicated her own heaviness to her little charge. Laura had turned uneasily, he saw as he peeped in at the open doorway, but again slept soundly, her lovely face now full turned towards him, half pillowed on the white and rounded arm he used to kiss with such rapture in the touch of his lips. Her white brow was shaded by the curling wealth of her soft, shining hair. The white eyelids drooped their long curving lashes over the rounded cheeks, faintly tinged with the rosy hue of youth and health. The exquisite lips, warm, delicately moulded, parted just enough to reveal the white, even, pearly teeth. The snowy, rounded throat and neck and shoulders were enhanced in their beauty by the filmy fabric of her gown, beneath which her full bosom slowly rose and fell in healthful respiration. How beautiful she was, how fair a picture of almost girlish innocence and freedom from all worldly dross or care! Even now, in the light of all the gradual revelation of her shallow, selfish vanity, the heart of the man yearned over and softened to her. If he had only realized,—if he had only known more of the world and life and duty other than mere soldier obligation, how different all might have been! What right had he to ask her to be his wife? She should have wedded a man many years her senior,—one fitted to guide and direct her,—able to lavish luxury upon her. It wasn't

all her fault that she had been so thoughtless, poor girl! What else had her mother been before her? What else could one expect of her? Would she miss him? he wondered. Not long,—not long, thank God! Beauty such as hers would soon win for her and baby home and comfort such as he could never give. That was all over. Something almost like a sob rose from his heart as he bent and softly touched with his lips the floating curl above her temple, then turned back to resume his work and reface his troubles. Thank God, Mullane's pistol would soon end them all and save him from the sin that was in his soul the day he took his own revolver with him. She was sleeping still when the morning gun shook the shutter of her window and he went forth to meet the sorrows of another day, as he had met those of the past,—alone.

The air was strangely still, yet the smoke from the kitchen chimneys back of the barracks settled downward about the adobe capping or drifted aimlessly along the roof-trees. Down in the stream-bed and over about the low bluffs of the farther shore, swallows and sand-martins were shooting and slanting about their nests in clamorous, complaining gyration. The flag, run up to the topmast at the crack of the gun, hung limp and lifeless, without so much as a flutter. Away to the northwest, over the pine crests of the range, a belt of billowy cloud gleamed snow-white at their summits, but frowned dark and ominous underneath. Huge masses of cumulus, balloon-like, thrust distended cheeks to the morning kiss of the sun; but these were well down to the west. The orient and the zenith skies were fleckless. Over at the stables two four-mule teams were hitching in, and army-wagons were being laden with tentage, luncheon-baskets, ice, boxes of bottled beer, band instruments, and the like, all going ahead to the White Gate, while Frazier's bandsmen were to follow in another as soon as they had finished breakfast. Their duty would be to set up the tents, the dancing-pavilion, and the lunch-tables on the level green in a lovely dell a mile within the gates, and have everything in readiness against the coming of the joyous party from the post. It was planned to carry the women-folk and such men as couldn't ride in the available ambulances and spring wagons, while the cavaliers would canter along on horseback. They would lunch at one, dance, fish, and flirt through the afternoon hours, have a supplementary bite and beer towards five o'clock, and drive homeward before dark. "Captain Barclay, as the guest of honor," said Mrs. Frazier, would go with her and 'Manda in her own vehicle, a venerable surrey. The colonel would drive, and Miss Frazier, now withdrawn by a maternal order from the supposed competition, in order that 'Manda's charms might concentrate, was bidden to ride. Winn had no thought of going. Mrs. Frazier had no thought that it would be possible for him or Laura to go,—the latter being reported ill in bed,—and therefore had found it easier to comply with the colonel's dictum that they must be invited, and she did it by dropping in and bidding "Miss Purdy" say to her mistress that she had called to inquire for her, and was so sorry, so very sorry, that her illness would prevent her coming to the picnic, whereupon Laura herself had appeared in becoming *négligée* at the head of the

stairs and smilingly assured the nonplussed lady that she was so much better she thought it really might do her good to go. But of this she said no word to Harry until, returning from stables at seven o'clock, he was surprised to find her up and dressing.

On the homeward way he had met Mr. Bralligan, whom he passed without recognition, but not without mental note of the unusual circumstance, Bralligan being a late riser, as a general thing, and having no business at Barclay's quarters anyhow. Brayton awaited him on the piazza and drew his arm within his own.

"Mullane sends word that he'll be ready at sunrise to-morrow, Harry, and I have said we were ready any time."

But the young fellow's voice trembled a bit as he anxiously scanned his classmate's grave, solemn face. It couldn't be that Winn was weakening, losing his nerve. It couldn't be that. But had his trouble so weighed upon him that he really welcomed the possible coming of the end? Brayton's was a hard lot just now. Assiduously he was hiding from his own captain all indications of the forthcoming meeting. Somehow he felt that Barclay would not hesitate to disclose the project to the post commander, and then every cad in Texas would jeer and crow and say it was Winn and he who crawfished. Barclay had noted that Winn seemed avoiding him again, and spoke of it to Brayton, who answered that Winn was avoiding everybody: he was blue and depressed about his affairs.

"Yet I understood that he had received more than enough to settle those commissary accounts," said the captain.

"Oh, yes," answered Brayton, "but there are other matters." How could he tell Barclay that he thought Winn's love and faith in his wife were dead and gone? How could he tell him that Winn would touch no dollar of the money until he had first met and satisfied another claim? Barclay's suspicions would have been aroused at once.

But Winn was having another trouble now. Laura had set her heart on going to the picnic, and for no other reason, she declared, than that she must show the women there was nothing amiss. If he and she, either or both, should fail to attend the Fraziers' entertainment, every one would say he still believed her guilty of having a rendezvous with Barclay at that unearthly hour, and that she was unforgiving.

As he had done many a time before, Winn yielded. What mattered it? There might be only that day for him. He could accomplish nothing by absenting himself. He could aid in brushing away any cloud upon her name by going and being devoted to her. So go they did, and women who watched with wary and suspicious eyes long remembered how fond and lover-like were Winn's attentions to his beautiful wife; how often on the way he rode to the side of that ambulance to say some little word to her; how anxiously he seemed to scan that lowering westward sky, for by the time they reached the Blanca gorge the cloud-banks were climbing to the zenith and the westward heavens were black as the cinder-patches along the heights about them, where fir and spruce and stunted pine had strewn the slopes with dry, resinous carpet, too easily ignited by the sparks from

hunter's pipe or camp-fire. At two o'clock, Blythe, Brooks, and Frazier, clambering a rocky ridge to the southeast of the lovely picnic cove, looked gravely at the blackening sky, then gravely into one another's faces. "I think we ought to start at once," said the colonel. "That's no place to be caught in a storm." And he pointed downward as he spoke.

At their feet was the deep, grassy valley, hemmed by precipitous bluffs. The greensward at the base of the barrier ridge was soft and velvety. A richer soil nourished the roots of the bunch-grass, and all men knew that more than once in bygone days the sudden swelling of the brawling waters that came foaming and swirling down the ravine from the depths of the crested heights within had turned that beautiful little sheltered nook into a deep lake that slowly emptied itself through the narrow, twisting, rocky gorge that ended at the White Gate. On the level turf the dancers were merrily footing it even now to the music of an inspiring quadrille, the pretty gowns of the women, the uniforms of the men, adding brightness to the picture. Below the camp the mules and horses were placidly grazing close by the inner opening of the gorge, the white covers of the wagons and the snowy canvas of the two or three tents adding to the picturesqueness of the scene. All at the feet of the watching group was life, laughter, and careless joy; all beyond that merry scene a black and ominous heaven, frowning down on gloomy pine and rocky hill-side. The ceaseless clamor of the seething waters, as they turned whirling into the tortuous gorge, rose steadily above the throb and thrill of the dance-music, and aloft those relentless clouds sailed sternly eastward over the sky.

Still the smoke from the camp-fires settled back and shrank about the earth, as though dreading the encounter with the sleeping forces of the air. Then, as the watchful eyes of the elders turned once more up the mountain-side, there came a cry from Brooks. "By God! it's coming! There isn't a second to lose!"

Frazier, following the direction of that pointing finger, looked upward, saw the crestward firs and pines and cedars bending, quivering before a blast as yet unfelt below, saw sheets of ashen vapor come sailing over the hill-tops and sweeping down the rocky sides, saw the whole mountain face turn black as in a single minute, as though hiding from the storm that came roaring down the slope, then lighting up the next instant in dazzling, purplish glare, as a zigzag bolt of lightning ripped the storm-cloud in twain, and in the instant, with crash and roar as of a thousand cannon rolled into one, let loose the deluge sleeping in its depths. As though Niagara were suddenly turned upon the hill-side, a vast volume of water swept downward, hissing, foaming, rolling over the rocks, and the leaping spray dashed high in air, as the black wealth of waters came surging down into the ravine.

"A cloud-burst, by all that's holy!" screamed Brooks, as he sprang down the grassy side of the bluff. "Up with you, up the hill-side, for your lives!" The dancers, faltering through the sudden flutter of the band, for the first time looked upward, and saw the peril. Then, men and women, bandsmen and "strikers," the camp made a wild rush up the eastward hill-side. Another blinding flash, another thunderous

roar that seemed to shake and loosen the rocks about them, and in that second of brilliant, dazzling glare the watchers could see the white wall of the Blanca come spray-tossing, seething, whirling huge logs and trees on its outermost wave, tumbling them end over end, now deep-engulfed, now high in air,—one immense, furious moving mountain of raging water, sweeping towards them from the depths of the chasm. Then, rolling and frothing over its puny banks in the valley below, a chocolate flood, foam-crested, spread right and left through the deserted camp, licking up the cook-fires, sweeping camp-chairs and tables off their legs, bodily lifting wagons and ambulances and sending them waltzing to the wild music of the storm over the flats where twinkled dainty-slippered feet the moment before, then bore them away towards the inner mouth of the gorge just in time to mix them up with such frantically struggling mules as through native obstinacy had resisted the impulse to scamper to higher ground while yet there was time. Worst sight of all, right there in the midst of the logs, chairs, wagon-beds, that came swirling beneath them, was a despairing woman's struggling form, revealed by a woman's white dress.

"Merciful God!" shrieked Mrs. Faulkner; "it's Laura Winn. She went up towards the falls not ten minutes ago."

Vain fool! What could have been her object? Barclay, never dancing, had been looking smilingly on. Both the Frazier girls had been led, not too willing, away by partners. Four sets had been formed, and Mrs. Winn, pleading fatigue, had asked to be excused, had sauntered past Barclay's seat, and, before his eyes, had turned up the narrow, winding, sheltered pathway by the Blanca. Had she dreamed it possible he would follow? Follow her he did not. Was it—a far more charitable thought—in search of Harry she had gone? Sombre and absent-minded, he had earlier slipped away among the trees, avoiding even Brayton. But now Barclay was seen on the near side of the torrent, limping up and along the steep slope, in imminent danger of slipping in, swinging in his hand a long lariat that he had drawn from the nearest wagon when the wild up-hill flight began. They remembered later that he was the last man out of the hollow. Already Brooks, Brayton, De Lancy, and half a dozen men were hurrying along the hill-side to aid, but Brayton reached him first and seized his arm just as another cry went up from the hill-top,—just as from the opposite side of the seething torrent the tall figure of Harry Winn came bounding through the stunted trees, and, hatless, wild-eyed, he seemed searching the tossing mass of wreckage on the bosom of the waters. Another instant still a white hand was waved aloft in their midst; then a white arm encircling a log, a terror-stricken white face, all showed dimly one moment before again borne underneath, hidden by the yellow body of a whirling ambulance, and in that one instant, far leaping, Winn plunged into the torrent and struck out savagely to reach his wife.

Vain, hopeless effort! Eddying in huge circle at the rocky shoulder just above the entrance to the gorge, the wild waters near the eastward shore bore their burden, jarring and crushing, close under the heights on which were clustered the panic-stricken revellers from Fort Worth.

But on the farther side, as it narrowed towards the entrance, the hissing torrent tore like a mill-race on its way. Into this heaving flood leaped Winn, and, before the eyes of screaming women and helpless, horror-stricken men, was sucked into the rush and whirl of foaming waves sweeping resistless through the rocky cañon, away towards the fair White Gate, away out and beyond the lovely foot-hills, tossed and battered and crushed by whirling logs, dragged under by the branches of uprooted trees, borne away at last, rolling, gasping, still feebly, faintly struggling, until on the broad lowlands the torrent spent the fury of its concentrated spite, and, swiftly still, but no longer raging as when curbed and held by the barrier gate, the Blanca foamed away to strew the tokens of the fearful storm right and left for miles along its banks, and to land all that was mortal of Harry Winn, bruised, battered, yet so placid in death that strong men's voices broke when telling how they found him, resting with weary head upon his arm on the sandy flat that lay just beneath the little summer-house on the overhanging bluffs,—just where Laura had looked down over the misty shallows from that very height the morning her soldier husband had reached his home at reveille and found her—wanting.

They bore her wailing home that night, widowed and crying, Woe is me! yet with what wild thoughts throbbing through her brain! Who was it that came leaping to her aid as she felt herself again dragged under in that swirling eddy? Whose voice was it that rang upon her drowning ears? Whose strong arms had clasped and sustained her and held her head above water, while other strong hands, hauling at the lariat made fast about his waist, drew them steadily to shore? Then angels came and ministered to her,—the women,—while the men clustered about her dripping hero, Galahad. Only for a moment, though, for there was mounting bareback in hot haste and thundering away at mad gallop, despite the drenching rain, for he who had saved the wife implored those who could ride to haste and save the husband.

All Fort Worth again went into mourning with the setting of that woful sun. It had borne its fill and more of battle and of sudden death.

And people resurrected Hodge's stories later on, though Hodge himself was readily excused. They recalled how Channing's widow and little ones were cared for after that officer's untimely death in the shadows of old Laramie Peak. They recalled Porter's ailing wife and the sea-side sojourn, and the old ordnance sergeant's family burned out at Sanders. It wasn't many days before the lovely, drooping widow of poor Harry Winn was quite well enough to be sent the long journey to the North; yet some weeks elapsed before she would consent, she said, to be torn from her beloved's grave. When, gently as possible, she was told in July that the quarters she still occupied were needed for her husband's successor, she proposed to spend a few weeks with Mr. and Mrs. Faulkner, but they were forced to limit that visit to a few days. There was no reason why she could not have started in June, for that devoted mother, Mrs. Waite, had dropped temporarily the pursuit of Senators and Representatives in Congress assembled, and

wired that she would meet her daughter in New Orleans, and the commanding general at San Antonio notified her that abundant means for all her homeward journeying for self and nurse and baby were in his hands. She thought she ought to stay until all poor Harry's affairs were straightened out; and Frazier had to say that that, too, was all attended to. Yet all the while she seemed to think that she could not sufficiently thank the heroic Captain Barclay, and begged to see him for that purpose, also to consult him, day after day, until—was there collusion?—he suddenly received orders to proceed to San Antonio on court-martial duty, and was on his way before she knew it,—before, said the Fraziers, she could get ready to go with him. Nor was he there when she passed through, under Fuller's escort, to the Gulf, nor did she see him once again in Texas. Letters, fervently grateful letters, came to him from Washington, whither she had flitted, and where, it was reported, she was to have a clerkship. But when people spoke of her to Barclay he smiled gravely and had nothing to say. All her late husband's accounts were declared settled and closed within a very few months, and all men knew by that time whose hand it was that had lifted the burden; yet Laura Waite had lost the last vestige of her power where Galbraith Barclay was concerned.

Long before the fall set in, Barclay returned to his post of duty, eagerly welcomed by officers and men, except the Faugh-a-Ballaghs. Somebody had sent from San Antonio a marble headstone for Winn's lonely grave in the little cemetery. Somebody had secured for his widow that clerkship in the Treasury Department, which within another year she left to wed a veteran admirer of her mother, to the unappeasable wrath of that well-preserved matron and the secret joy of 'Manda Frazier, who thought that now perhaps the eyes of Galahad would open to her own many charms of mind and person. Yet they did not. Somebody in a childish, sprawling hand was writing letters every week to the doughboy trooper, who by that time had the best drilled company at Worth, owing, said the Faugh-a-Ballaghs, when forced to admit the fact, to Brayton's abilities and to an Irish sergeant. Barclay's weekly mail was bigger than that of anybody else except the commanding officer, whose missives, however, were mainly official, and the number of letters penned in feminine or childish hands seemed, like Galahad's godchildren, ever on the increase. Mrs. Blythe came back from leave, bonnier than ever, and blissful beyond compare in the possession of secrets she could not share with even her oldest cronies, yet that leaked out in ways no man could hope to stop. Ned Lawrence's children were well, happy, thriving,—little Jim at Barclay's home with other godsons, two or three, where a widowed sister cared for them as for her own, so said Mrs. Blythe when fairly cornered, while Ada was at a famous old Connecticut school not far from the Barclay homestead.

"Good heavens!" said Blythe, one day in late October, "these women have powers of divination that would be priceless at police head-quarters. Why, they've got hold of facts I thought only Mrs. Blythe and I knew,—facts that Barclay would have kept concealed from every one, but that we simply can't deny."

And so, little by little, the details of some, at least, of Galahad's benefactions became known, though no man knew how many more were held in reserve. For three long years he lived his simple, studious, dutiful life at Worth, a man the soldiers and their wives and children learned to love and look up to as their model of all that was kind and humane (they well-nigh worshipped him at Christmas times), —a man his brother officers of the better class honored as friend and comrade, worth their whole trust and esteem, and from the armor of whose reserve and tolerance the shafts of the envious and malicious glanced harmless into empty air.

There were women, old and young, who thought him lacking in more ways than one. The Fraziers said not much, but looked unutterable things when they went North on leave and people asked for Galahad. It was a family tradition that he had treated 'Manda very badly; that is, mamma said as much, but the elder sister had views of her own not entirely in harmony with those of her beloved parent. 'Manda herself found consolation by marrying in the army not two years later, and her husband thinks to this very day that Barclay, with all his wealth, secretly envies him his treasure, though admitting, in those lucid intervals to which so many lords are subject, that perhaps Barclay wasn't so confoundedly unlucky after all. It was at their quarters some years later still, at a far-distant post, that in the course of an evening's call, in company with his host, Lieutenant-Colonel Brooks, the chronicler of a portion, at least, of this episode of old-time army life was favored with the most important facts of all.

"What do you think!" said the stout possessor of Mrs. 'Manda's matured and rounded charms, as he came bustling in with the *Army and Navy* in his hand, "Galahad Barclay's married at last. Here it is: To Ada, only daughter of the late Brevet Lieutenant-Colonel Lawrence, —th U.S. Cavalry."

"Ada Lawrence! That child!" screamed madame, with eyes and drawl expansive. "Well, of all——"

But others, who have seen her in her happy wifehood, declare that Ada Lawrence grew up to be one of the loveliest of the lovely girls that married in the army,—and they are legion.

THE END.

THE LAND OF THE WINTER CUCUMBER.

FAR down the west coast of Florida, the broad mouth of the beautiful Caloosahatchee pours the waters of Okechobee into the Gulf of Mexico.

Southward lie everglades, evergreen hammocks, sunshiny barrens, coral reefs, shell-strewn beaches, and emerald isles. It is the home of the palm, the mangrove, the mastic, the lignum-vitæ; of the gaudy ponciana, the jessamine, the flowering cactus; of the date and mango, the cocoanut, banana, pineapple, and sapodilla.

Many years ago, thousands, perhaps, it was the home of a queer people, about whom our knowledge is meagre. They descended from Adam, no doubt, but we don't know whence they came or whither they went, or whether they were white or black or red or yellow. We don't know whether they lived in the time of Moses or Julius Cæsar, or whether they spoke Sanskrit, Hebrew, Greek, or Aztec.

They did not build pyramids or carve history on monoliths or tablets. Their record, all we know of them, is preserved in heaps of shells. These, evidently, were piled by human beings in the unknown past, but that is all we know, except that beneath the shells, sunk deep in the sand, are the ends of posts or piles, on the top of which, probably, dwellings were built twenty feet or more above the ebb and flow of the tides.

They were built along the bays and inlets, probably at low-water mark, where the tides flowed under them, and where boats could land loaded with shell-fish,—oysters, conchs, clams, and mussels,—on which chiefly the people seem to have lived, and for which, if evidences count for anything, they had a wonderful appetite, for they made mounds of the shells all along the coast, in many places acres in extent and from twenty to forty feet deep.

The fact that the bays and inlets contiguous to these mounds are now stocked with shell-fish proves, in a measure, their antiquity, for in their upraising every crustacean and mollusk in leagues around must have lent his assistance, or rather his shell. As the supply was exhausted in one place, the people probably moved to another, and when the last shell-fish was eaten the last man of them may have died of famine. At all events, they are all gone now, and the sites of their ancient dwellings and the débris of their ancient dinners, raked over and levelled down, are used as garden-spots to grow winter cucumbers, beans, and peas for cold-blooded Northern people.

This is a utilitarian age, if it is anything, and, however sentiment may linger around the possible scenes and incidents of the dim and misty past, the people of that coast do not allow it to interfere in questions of cucumbers and cabbage.

Without the least compunction, they take these interesting mounds —hoary with age, gray with shells, rich with plant-food—and adorn them with potatoes and spinach and squash. Better garden-land can-

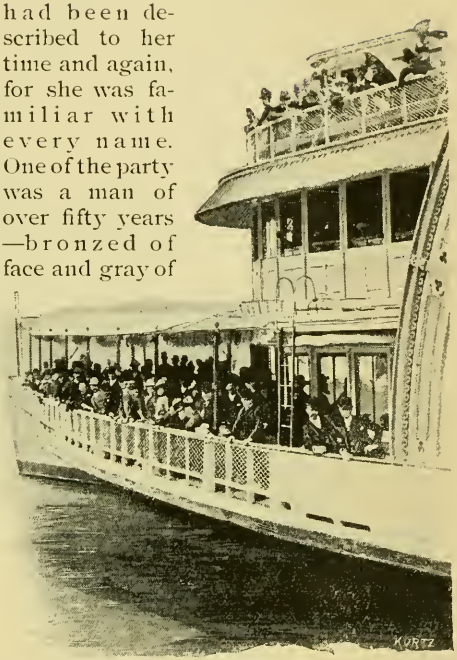
FROM "THE POINT" TO THE PLAINS.

By Captain Charles King, U. S. Army.

I.

SHE was standing at the very end of the forward deck, and, with flushing cheeks and sparkling eyes, gazing eagerly upon the scene before her. Swiftly, smoothly rounding the rugged promontory on the right, the steamer was just turning into the highland "reach" at Fort Montgomery and heading straight away for the landings on the sunset shore. It was only mid-May, but the winter had been mild, the spring early, and now the heights on either side were clothed in raiment of the freshest, coolest green; the vines were climbing in luxuriant leaf all over the face of the rocky scarp that hemmed the swirling tide of the Hudson; the radiance of the evening sunshine bathed all the eastern shores in mellow light and left the dark slopes and deep gorges of the opposite range all the deeper and darker by contrast. A lively breeze had driven most of the passengers within doors as they sped through the broad waters of the Tappan Zee, but, once within the sheltering traverses of Dunderberg and the heights beyond, many of their number reappeared upon the promenade deck, and first among them was the bonnie little maid now clinging to the guard-rail at the very prow, and, heedless of fluttering skirt or fly-away curl, watching with all her soul in her bright blue eyes for the first glimpse of the haven where she would be. No eyes on earth look so eagerly for the grim, gray *façade* of the riding-hall or the domes and turrets of the library building, as those of the girl who has spent the previous summer at West Point.

Utterly absorbed in her watch she gave no heed to other passengers who presently took their station close at hand. One was a tall, dark-eyed, dark-haired young lady in simple and substantial traveling dress. With her were two men in tweeds and Derby hats, and to these companions she constantly turned with questions as to prominent objects in the rich and varied landscape. It was evident that she was seeing for the first time sights that had been described to her time and again, for she was familiar with every name. One of the party was a man of over fifty years—bronzed of face and gray of



hair, but with erect carriage and piercing black eyes that spoke of vigor, energy, and probably of a life in the open air. It needed not the tri-colored button of the Loyal Legion in the lapel of his coat to tell that he was a soldier. Any one who chose to look—and there were not a few—could speedily have seen, too, that these were father and daughter.

The other man was still taller than the dark, wiry, slim-built soldier, but in years he was not more than twenty-eight or nine. His eyes, brows, hair, and the heavy mustache that drooped over his mouth were all of a dark, soft brown. His complexion was clear and ruddy; his frame powerful and athletic. Most of the time he stood a silent but attentive listener to the eager talk between the young lady and her father, but his kindly eyes rarely left her face; he was ready to respond instantly when she turned to question him, and when he spoke it was with the unmistakable intonation of the South.

The deep, mellow tones of the bell were booming out their landing signal as the steamer shot into the shadow of a high, rocky cliff. Far aloft on the overhanging piazzas of a big hotel, fluttering handkerchiefs greeted the passengers on the decks below. Many eyes were turned thither in recognition of the salute, but not those of the young girl at the bow. One might, indeed, have declared her resentful of this intermediate stop. The instant the gray walls of the riding school had come into view she had signaled, eagerly, with a wave of her hand to a gentleman and lady seated in quiet conversation under the shelter of the deck. Presently the former, a burly, broad-shouldered man of forty or thereabouts, came sauntering forward and stood close behind her.

"Well, Nan! Most there I see. Think you can hold on five minutes longer, or shall I toss you over and let you swim for it?"

For answer Miss Nan clasps a wooden pillar in her gray-gloved hands, and tilts excitedly on the toes of her tiny boots, never once relaxing her gaze on the dock a mile or more away up stream.

"Just think of being so near Willy—and all of them—and not seeing one to speak to until after parade," she finally says.

"Simply inhuman!" answers her companion with commendable gravity, but with humorous twinkle about his eyes. "Is it worth all the long journey, and all the excitement in which your mother tells me you've been plunged for the past month?"

"Worth it, Uncle Jack!" and the blue eyes flash upon him indignantly. "Worth it? You wouldn't ask if you knew it all, as I do."

"Possibly not," says Uncle Jack, whimsically. "I haven't the advantage of being a girl with a brother and a baker's dozen of beaux in bell buttons and gray. I'm only an old fossil of a 'cit,' with a scamp of a nephew and that limited conception of the delights of West Point which one can derive from running up there every time that versatile youngster gets into a new scrape. You'll admit my opportunities have been frequent."

"It isn't Willy's fault—and you know it, Uncle Jack, though we all know how good you've been; but he's had more bad luck and—and—injustice than any cadet in the corps. Lots of his classmates told me so."

"Yes," says Uncle Jack, musingly. "That is what your blessed mother, yonder, wrote me when I went up last winter, the time Billy submitted that explanation to the commandant with its pleasing reference to the fox that had lost its tail—you doubtless recall the incident—and came within an ace of dismissal in consequence."

"I don't care!" interrupts Miss Nan with flashing eyes. "Will had provocation enough to say much worse things: Jimmy Frazer wrote me so, and said the whole class was sticking up for him."

"I do not remember having had the honor of meeting Jimmy Frazer," remarks Uncle Jack, with an aggravating drawl that is peculiar to him. "Possibly he was one of the young gentlemen who didn't call owing to some temporary impediment in the way of light prison——"

"Yes; and all because he took Will's part, as I believe," is the impetuous reply. "Oh! I'll be so thankful when they're out of it all."

"So will they, no doubt. 'Sticking up'—wasn't that Mr. Frazer's expression?—for Bill seems to have been an expensive luxury all round. Wonder if sticking up is something they continue when they get to their regiments? Billy has two or three weeks yet in which to ruin his chances of ever reaching one—and he has exhibited astonishing aptitude for tripping himself up thus far."

"Uncle Jack! How can you speak so of Willy, when he is so devoted to you? When he gets to his regiment there won't be any Lieutenant Lee to nag and worry him night and day. *He's* the cause of all the trouble."

"That so?" drawls Uncle Jack. "I didn't happen to meet Mr. Lee, either—he was away on leave—but as Bill and your mother had some such views, I looked into things a bit. It appears to be a matter of record that my enterprising nephew had more demerit before the advent of Mr. Lee than since. As for 'extras' and confinements, his stock was always big enough to bear the market down to bottom prices."

The boat is once more under way, and

a lull in the chat close at hand induces Uncle Jack to look about him. The younger of the two men lately standing with the dark-eyed girl has quietly withdrawn, and is now shouldering his way to a point out of ear-shot. There he calmly turns and waits; his glance again resting upon her whose side he has so suddenly quitted. She has followed him with her eyes until he stops; then with heightened color resumes a low-toned chat with her father. Uncle Jack is a keen observer, and his next words are inaudible except to his niece.

"Nan, my child, I apprehend that remarks upon the characteristics of the officers at the Point had best be confined to the bosom of the family. We may be in their very midst."

She turns, flushing, and for the first time her blue eyes meet the dark ones of the older girl. Her cheeks redden still more, and she whirls about again.

"I can't help it, Uncle Jack," she murmurs. "I'd just like to tell them all what I think of Will's troubles."

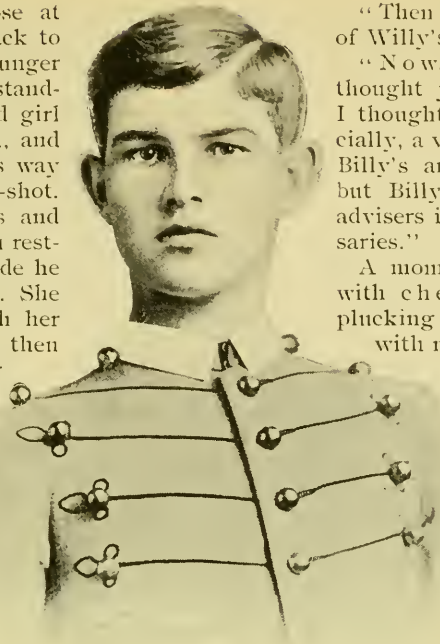
"Oh! Candor is to be admired of all things," says Uncle Jack, airily. "Still it is just as well to observe the old adage, 'Be sure you're right,' etc. Now, *I* own to being rather fond of Bill, despite all the worry he has given your mother, and all the bother he has been to me——"

"All the worry that others have given *him*, you ought to say, Uncle Jack."

"W-e-ll, har-d-ly. It didn't seem to me that the corps, as a rule, thought Billy the victim of persecution."

"They all tell *me* so, at least," is the indignant outburst.

"Do they, Nan? Well, of course that settles it. Still, there were a few who reluctantly admitted having other views when I pressed them closely."



"A SUITABLE CANDIDATE FOR THE OFFICE OF GENERAL IN CHIEF."

"Then they were no friends of Willy's, or mine either!"

"Now, do you know, I thought just the other way? I thought one of them, especially, a very stanch friend of Billy's and yours, too, Nan, but Billy seems to consider advisers in the light of adversaries."

A moment's pause. Then, with cheeks still red, and plucking at the rope netting with nervous fingers, Miss Nan essays a tentative. Her eyes are downcast as she asks:

"I suppose you mean Mr. Stanley?"

"The very man, Nanette; very much of a man to my thinking."

The bronzed soldier standing near can not but have heard the name and the words. His face takes on a glow and the black eyes kindle.

"Mr. Stanley would not say to *me* that Willy is to blame," pouts the maiden, and her little foot is beating impatient tattoo on the deck.

"Neither would I—just now—if I were Mr. Stanley; but all the same he decidedly opposed the view that Mr. Lee was 'down on Billy,' as your mother seems to think."

"That's because Mr. Lee is tactical officer commanding the company, and Mr. Stanley is cadet captain. Oh! I will take him to task if he has been—been——"

But she does not finish. She has turned quickly in speaking, her hand clutching a little knot of bell buttons hanging by a chain at the front of her dress. She has turned just in time to catch a warning glance in Uncle Jack's twinkling eyes, and to see a grim smile lurking under the gray mustache of the gentleman with the Loyal Legion button who is leading away the tall young lady with the dark hair. In another moment they have rejoined the third member of

their party—he who first withdrew—and it is evident that something has happened which gives them all much amusement. They are chatting eagerly together, laughing not a little, although the laughter, like their words, is entirely inaudible to Miss Nan. But she feels a twinge of indignation when the tall girl turns and looks directly at her. There is nothing unkindly in the glance. There even is merriment in the dark, handsome eyes and lurking among the dimples around that beautiful mouth. Why did those eyes—so heavily fringed, so thickly shaded—seem to her, familiar as old friends? Nan could have vowed she had somewhere met that girl before, and now that girl was laughing at her. Not rudely, not aggressively to be sure—she had turned away again the instant she saw that the little maiden's eyes were upon her—but all the same, said Nan to herself, she *was* laughing. They were all laughing, and it must have been because of her outspoken defense of brother Will, and equally outspoken defiance of his persecutors. What made it worse was that Uncle Jack was laughing, too.

"Do you know who they are?" she demands indignantly.

"Not I, Nan," responds Uncle Jack. "Never saw them before in my life, but I warrant we see them again, and at the Point, too. Come, child. There's our bell, and we must start for the gangway. Your mother is hailing us now. Never mind this time, little woman," he continues kindly, as he notes the cloud on her brow. "I don't think any harm has been done, but it is just as well not to be impetuous in public speech. Ah! I thought so. They are to get off here with us."

Three minutes more and a little stream of passengers flows out upon the broad government dock, and, as luck would have it, Uncle Jack and his charges are just behind the trio in which, by this time, Miss Nan is deeply, if not painfully, interested. A soldier in the undress uniform of a corporal of artillery hastens forward and, saluting, stretches forth his hand to take the satchel carried by the tall man with the brown mustache.

"The lieutenant's carriage is at the gate," he says, whereat Uncle Jack, who is conducting her mother just in front, looks back over his shoulder and nods compassionately at Nan.

"Has any despatch been sent down to meet Colonel Stanley?" she hears the tall man inquire, and this time Uncle Jack's backward glance is a combination of mischief and concern.

"Nothing, sir, and the adjutant's orderly is here now. This is all he brought down," and the corporal hands to the inquirer a note, the superscription of which the young officer quickly scans; then turns, and, while his soft brown eyes light with kindly interest and he bares his shapely head, accosts the lady on Uncle Jack's arm:

"Pardon me, madame. This note must be for you. Mrs. McKay, is it not?"

And as her mother smiles her thanks and the others turn away, Nan's eager eyes catch sight of Will's well known writing. Mrs. McKay rapidly reads it as Uncle Jack is bestowing bags and bundles in the omnibus and feeing the acceptive porter, who now rushes back to the boat in the nick of time.

"Awful sorry I can't get up to the hotel to see you," says the note, dolorously, but by no means unexpectedly. "I'm in confinement and can't get a permit. Come to the officer-in-charge's office right after supper, and he'll let me see you there awhile. Stanley's officer-of-the-day, and he'll be there to show the way. In haste, WILL."

"Now *isn't* that poor Willy's luck every time!" exclaims Miss Nan, her blue eyes threatening to fill with tears. "I *do* think they might let him off the day we get here."

"Unquestionably," answers Uncle Jack, with great gravity, as he assists the ladies into the yellow omnibus. "You duly notified the superintendent of your impending arrival, I suppose?"

Mrs. McKay smiles quietly. Hers is a sweet and gentle face, lined with many a trace of care and anxiety. Her brother's whimsical ways are old acquaintances, and she knows how to treat them; but Nan is young, impulsive, and easily teased. She flares up instantly.

"Of course we *didn't*, Uncle Jack; how utterly absurd it would sound! But Willy knew we were coming, and *he* must

"THEN WOULD FOLLOW THE HALF-HOUR'S WALK AND CHAT."

have told him when he asked for his permit, and it does seem too hard that he was refused."

"Heartless in the last degree," says Uncle Jack, sympathetically, but with the same suggestive drawl. "Yonder go the father and sister of the young gentleman whom you announced your intention of castigating because he didn't agree that Billy was being abused, Nan. You will have a chance this very evening, won't you? He's officer-of-the-day, according to Billy's note, and can't escape. You'll have wound up the whole family by tattoo. Quite a good day's work. Billy's opposers will do well to take warning and keep out of the way hereafter," he continues teasingly. "Oh—ah—*corporal!*" he calls, "who was the young officer who just drove off in the carriage with the lady and gentleman?"

"That was Lieutenant Lee, sir." Uncle Jack turns and contemplates his niece with an expression of the liveliest admiration.

"'Pon my word, Miss Nan, you are a most comprehensive young person. You've indeed let no guilty man escape."

II.

THE evening that opened so clear and sunshiny has clouded rapidly over. Even as the four gray companies come "trotting" in from parade, and, with the ease of long habit, quickly forming line in the barrack area, some heavy raindrops begin to fall; the drum major has hurried his band away; the crowd of spectators, unusually large for so early in the season, scatters for shelter; umbrellas pop up here and there under the beautiful trees along the western roadway; the adjutant rushes through the "delinquency list," in a style distinguishable only to his stolid, silent audience standing immova-

"SHE WALKED TOWARD THE LITTLE PARTY, STILL TWIRLING THE CARD IN HER TAPERING FINGERS."

bly before him—a long perspective of gray uniforms and glistening white belts. The fateful book is closed with a snap, and the echoing walls ring to the quick commands of the first sergeants, at which the bayonets are struck from the rifle barrels, and the long line bursts into a living torrent sweeping into the hallways to escape the coming shower.

When the battalion reappears, a few moments later, every man is in his overcoat, and here and there little knots of upper classmen gather, and there is eager and excited talk.

A soldierly, dark-eyed young fellow, with the red sash of the officer-of-the-day over his shoulder, comes briskly out of the hall of the fourth division. The chevrons of a cadet captain are glistening on his arm, and he alone has not donned the gray overcoat, although he has discarded the plumed shako in deference to the coming storm; yet he hardly seems to notice the downpour of the rain; his face is grave and his lips set and compressed as he rapidly makes his way through the groups awaiting the signal to "fall in" for supper.

"Stanley! Oh, Stanley!" is the hail from a knot of classmates, and he halts and looks about as two or three of the party hasten after him.

"What does Billy say about it?" is the eager inquiry.

"Nothing—new."

"Well—that report as good as finds him on demerit, doesn't it?"

"The next thing to it: though he has been as close to the brink before."

"But—great Scott! He has two weeks yet to run; and Billy McKay can no more live two weeks without demerit than Patsy, here, without 'spooning.'"

Mr. Stanley's eyes look tired as he glances up from under the visor of his forage cap. He is not as tall by half a head as the young soldiers by whom he is surrounded.

"We were talking of his chances at dinner time," he says gravely; "Billy never mentioned this break of his yesterday, and was surprised to hear the report read out to-night. I believe he had forgotten the whole thing."

"Who 'skinned' him?—Lee? He was there."

"I don't know; McKay says so, but there were several officers over there at the time. It is a report he cannot get off, and it comes at a most unlucky moment."

With this remark Mr. Stanley turns away and goes striding through the crowded area toward the guard-house. Another moment and there is sudden drum beat; the gray overcoats leap into ranks; the subject of the recent discussion—a jaunty young fellow with laughing blue eyes—comes tearing out of the fourth division just in time to avoid a "late," and the clamor of ten score voices gives place to silence broken only by the rapid calling of the rolls and the prompt "here"—"here," in response.

If ever there was a pet in the corps of cadets he lived in the person of Billy McKay. Bright as one of his own buttons; jovial, generous, impulsive; he had only one enemy in the battalion—and that one, as he had been frequently told, was himself. This, however, was a matter which he could not at all be induced to believe. Of the Academic Board in general, of his instructors in large measure, but of the four or five ill-starred soldiers known as "tactical officers" in particular, Mr. McKay entertained very decided and most unflattering opinions. He had won his cadetship through rigid competitive examination against all comers; he was a natural mathematician of whom a professor had said that he "*could* stand in the fives and *wouldn't* stand in the forties"; years of his boyhood spent in France had made him master of the colloquial forms of the court language of Europe, yet a dozen classmates who had never seen a French verb before their admission stood above him at the end of the first term. He had gone to the first section like a rocket and settled to the bottom of it like a stick. No subject in the course was really hard to him—his natural aptitude enabling him to triumph over the toughest problems. Yet he hated work, and would often face about with an empty blackboard and take a zero and a report for neglect of studies, that half an hour's application would have rendered impossible. Classmates who saw impending danger would frequently make stolen visits to his room toward the close of the term and profess to be baffled by the

lesson for the morrow, and Billy would promptly knock the ashes out of the pipe he was smoking contrary to regulations and lay aside the guitar on which he had been softly strumming—also contrary to regulations; would pick up the neglected calculus or mechanics; get interested in the work of explanation, and end by having learned the lesson in spite of himself. This was too good a joke to be kept a secret, and by the time the last year came Billy had found it all out and refused to be longer hoodwinked.

There was never the faintest danger of his being found deficient in studies, but there was ever the glaring prospect of his being discharged "on demerit." Mr. McKay and the regulations of the U. S. Military Academy had been at loggerheads from the start.

And yet—frank, jolly and generous as he was in all intercourse with his comrades, there was never a time when this young gentleman could be brought to see that in such matters he was the arbiter of his own destiny. Like the Irishman whose first announcement on setting foot on American soil was that he was "agin the government," Billy McKay believed that regulations were made only to oppress; that the men who drafted such a code were idiots, and that those whose duty it became to enforce it were simply spies and tyrants, resistance to whom was innate virtue. He was forever ignoring or violating some written or unwritten law of the academy; was frequently being caught in the act and was invariably ready to attribute the resultant report to ill luck which pursued no one else, or to a deliberate persecution which followed him forever. Every six months he had been on the verge of dismissal, and now, a fortnight from the final examination, with a margin of only six demerit to run on, Mr. Billy McKay had just been read out in the daily list of culprits or victims as "Shouting from window of barracks to cadets in area during study hours—three forty-five, and four P.M."

There was absolutely no excuse for this performance. The regulations enjoined silence and order in barracks during "call to quarters." It had been raining a little, and he was in hopes there would be no battalion drill, in which event he would venture on throwing off his uniform and spreading himself out on his bed with a pipe and a novel—two things he dearly loved. Ten minutes would have decided the question legitimately for him, but, being of impatient temperament, he could not wait, and, catching sight of the adjutant and the senior captain coming from the guard-house, Mr. McKay sung out in tones familiar to every man within earshot:

"Hi, Jim! Is it battalion drill?"

The adjutant glanced quickly up—a warning glance as he could have seen—merely shook his head and went rapidly on, while his comrade, the cadet first captain, clinched his fist at the window and growled between his set teeth, "Be quiet, you idiot!"

But poor Billy persisted. Louder yet he called:

"Well—say—Jimmy! Come up here after four o'clock. I'll be in confinement, and can't come out. Want to see you."

And the windows over at the office of the commandant being wide open, and that official being seated there in consultation with three or four of his assistants, and as Mr. McKay's voice was as well known to them as to the corps, there was no alternative. The colonel himself "confounded" the young scamp for his recklessness, and directed a report to be entered against him.

And now, as Mr. Stanley is betaking himself to his post at the guard-house, his heart is heavy within him because of this new load on his comrade's shoulders.

"How on earth could you have been so careless, Billy?" he had asked him as McKay, fuming and indignant, was throwing off his accoutrements in his room on the second floor.

"How 'd I know anybody was over there!" was the boyish reply. "It's just a skin on suspicion anyhow. Lee couldn't have seen me, nor could anybody else. I stood way back by the clothes-press."

"There's no suspicion about it, Billy. There isn't a man that walks the area that doesn't know your voice as well as he does Jim Pennock's. Confound it! You'll get over the limit yet, man, and break your—your mother's heart."

"O come now, Stan.! You've been

nagging me ever since last camp. Why 'n thunder can't you see I'm doing my best? Other men don't row me as you do, or stand up for the 'tacks.' I tell you that fellow Lee never loses a chance of skinning me: he *takes* chances, by gad, and I'll make his eyes pop out of his head when he reads what I've got to say about it."

"You're too hot for reason now, McKay," said Stanley, sadly. "Step out or you'll get a late for supper. I'll see you after awhile. I gave that note to the orderly, by the way, and he said he'd take it down to the dock himself."

"Mother and Nan will probably come to the guard-house right after supper. Look out for them for me, will you, Stan.,—until old Snipes gets there and sends for me?"

And as Mr. Stanley shut the door instantly and went clattering down the iron stairs, Mr. McKay caught no sign on his face of the sudden flutter beneath that snugly buttoned coat.

It was noticed by more than one of the little coterie at his own table that the officer-of-the-day hurried through his supper and left the mess hall long before the command for the first company to rise. It was a matter well known to every member of the graduating class that, almost from the day of her arrival during the encampment of the previous summer, Phil Stanley had been a devoted admirer of Miss Nannie McKay. It was not at all to be wondered at.

Without being what is called an ideal beauty, there was a fascination about this winsome little maid which few could resist. She had all her brother's impulsiveness, all his enthusiasm, and, it may be safely asserted, all his abiding faith in the sacred and unimpeachable character of cadet friendships. If she possessed a little streak of romance that was not discernible in him, she managed to keep it well in the background; and though she had her favorites in the corps, she was so frank and cordial and joyous in her manner to all, that it was impossible to say which one, if any, she regarded in the light of a lover. Whatever comfort her gentle mother may have derived from this state of affairs, it was "hard lines on Stanley," as his classmates put it, for there could be little doubt that the captain of the color company was a sorely smitten man.

He was not what is commonly called a "popular man" in the corps. The son of a cavalry officer, reared on the wide frontier and educated only imperfectly, he had not been able to enter the academy until nearly twenty years of age, and nothing but indomitable will and diligence had carried him through the difficulties of the first half of the course. It was not until the middle of the third year that the chevrons of a sergeant were awarded him, and even then the battalion was taken by surprise. There was no surprise a few months later, however, when he was promoted over a score of classmates and made captain of his company. It was an open secret that the commandant had said that if he had it all to do over again, Mr. Stanley would be made "first captain"—a rumor that big John Burton, the actual incumbent of that office, did not at all fancy. Stanley was "square" and impartial. His company was in admirable discipline, though many of his classmates growled and wished he were not "so confoundedly military." The second classmen, always the most critical judges of the qualifications of their seniors, conceded that he was more soldierly than any man of his year, but were unanimous in the opinion that he should show more deference to men of their standing in the corps. The "yearlings" swore by him in any discussion as to the relative merits of the four captains; but with equal energy, swore at him when contemplating that fateful volume known as "the skin book." The fourth classmen—the "plebes"—simply worshipped the ground he trod on; and as between General Sherman and Philip Stanley, it is safe to say these youngsters would have determined on the latter as the more suitable candidate for the office of general-in-chief. Of course they admired the adjutant—the plebes always do that—and not infrequently to the exclusion of the other cadet officers—but there was something grand, to them, about this dark-eyed, dark-faced, dignified captain who never stooped to trifle with them; was always so precise and courteous, and yet so immeasurably distant. They were ten times more afraid of him than they

had been of Lieutenant Rolfe, who was their "tack" during camp, or of the great, handsome, kindly-voiced dragoon who succeeded him—Lieutenant Lee, of the —th cavalry. They approved of this latter gentleman because he belonged to the regiment of which Mr. Stanley's father was lieutenant-colonel, and to which it was understood Mr. Stanley was to be assigned on his graduation. What they could not at all understand was that, once graduated, Mr. Stanley could step down from his high position in the battalion of cadets and become a mere file closer. Yes. Stanley was too strict and soldierly to command that decidedly ephemeral tribute known as "popularity," but no man in the corps of cadets was more thoroughly respected. If there were flaws in the armor of his personal character they were not such as to be vigorously prodded by his comrades. He had firm friends—devoted friends, who grew to honor and trust him more with every year; but, strong though they knew him to be, he had found his conqueror. There was a story in the first class that in Stanley's old leather writing-case was a sort of secret compartment, and in this compartment was treasured "a knot of ribbon blue" that had been worn last summer close under the dimpled white chin of pretty Nannie McKay.

And now on this moist May evening as he hastens back to barracks, Mr. Stanley spies a little group standing in front of the guard-house. Lieutenant Lee is there—in his uniform now, and with him are the tall girl in the simple traveling dress, and the trim, wiry, gray mustached soldier whom we saw on the boat. The rain is falling steadily, which accounts for and possibly excuses Mr. Lee's retention of the young lady's arm in his as he holds the umbrella over both, but the colonel no sooner catches sight of the officer-of-the-day than his own umbrella is cast aside, and with light, eager, buoyant steps, father and son hasten to meet each other. In an instant their hands are clasped—both hands, and through moistening eyes the veteran of years of service, and the boy in whom his hopes are centered, gaze into each other's faces.

"Phil—my son!"

"Father!"

No other words. It is the first meeting in two long years. The area is deserted save by the smiling pair watching from under the dripping umbrella with eyes nearly as moist as the skies. There is no one to comment or to scoff. In the father's heart, mingling with the deep joy at this reunion with his son, there wells up sudden, irrepressible sorrow. "Ah, God!" he thinks. "Could his mother but have lived to see him now!" Perhaps Philip reads it all in the strong yet tremulous clasp of those sinewy brown hands, but for the moment neither speaks again. There are some joys so deep, some heart longings so overpowering, that many a man is forced to silence or to a levity of manner which is utterly repugnant to him, in the effort to conceal from the world the tumult of emotion that so nearly makes him weep. Who that has read that inimitable page will ever forget the meeting of that genial sire and gallant son in the grimy old railway car filled with the wounded from Antietam, in Doctor Holmes's "My Search for the Captain"?

When Phil Stanley, still clinging to his father's hand, turns to greet his sister and her handsome escort, he is suddenly aware of another group that has entered the area. Two ladies, marshaled by his classmate, Mr. Pennock, are almost at his side, and one of them is the blue-eyed girl he loves.

III.

LOVELY as is West Point in May, it is hardly the best time for a visit there if one's object be to see the cadets. From early morn until late at night every hour is taken up with duties, academic or military. Mothers, sisters and sweethearts, whose eyes so eagerly follow the evolutions of the gray ranks, can only hope for a few words between drill and dress parade, or else in the shortest half hour in all the world—that which intervenes 'twixt supper and evening "call to quarters." That Miss Nannie McKay should make frequent and unfavorable comment on this state of affairs goes without saying; yet, had she been enabled to see her beloved brother but once a month and her cadet friends at intervals

almost as rare, that incomprehensible young damsel would have preferred the Point to any other place in the world.

It was now ten days since her arrival, and she had had perhaps three chats with Willy, who, luckily for him, though he could not realize it, was spending most of his time "confined to quarters," and consequently out of much of the temptation he would otherwise have been in. Mrs. McKay had been able to see very little more of the young man, but she had the prayerful consolation that if he could only be kept out of mischief a few days longer he would then be through with it all, out of danger of dismissal, actually graduated, and once more her own boy to monopolize as she chose.

It takes most mothers a long, long time to become reconciled to the complete usurpation of all their former rights by this new parent whom their boys are bound to serve—this anything but *Alma* Mater—the war school of the nation. As for Miss Nan, though she made it a point to declaim vigorously at the fates that prevented her seeing more of her brother, it was wonderful how well she looked and in what blithe spirits she spent her days. Regularly as the sun came around, before guard mount in the morning and right after supper in the evening, she was sure to be on the south piazza of the old hotel, and when presently the cadet uniforms began to appear at the hedge, she, and others, would go tripping lightly down the path to meet the wearers, and then would follow the half hour's walk and chat in which she found such infinite delight. So, too, could Mr. Stanley, had he been able to appear as her escort on all occasions; but despite his strong personal inclination and effort, this was by no means the case. The little lady was singularly impartial in the distribution of her time, and only by being first applicant had he secured to himself the one long afternoon that had yet been vouchsafed them—the cadet half holiday of Saturday.

But if Miss Nan found time hanging heavily on her hands at other hours of the day, there was one young lady at the hotel who did not—a young lady whom, by this time, she regarded with constantly deepening interest—Miriam Stanley.

Other girls, younger girls, who had found their ideals in the cadet gray, were compelled to spend hours of the twenty-four in waiting for the too brief *half* hour in which it was possible to meet them; but Miss Stanley was very differently situated. It was her first visit to the Point. She met, and was glad to meet, all Philip's friends and comrades; but it was plainly to be seen, said all the girls at Craney's, that between her and the tall cavalry officer whom they best knew through cadet descriptions, there existed what they termed an "understanding," if not an engagement. Every day, when not prevented by duties, Mr. Lee would come stalking up from barracks, and presently away they would stroll together—a singularly handsome pair, as every one admitted. One morning soon after the Stanleys' arrival he appeared in saddle on his stylish bay, accompanied by an orderly leading another horse, side-saddled; and then, as by common impulse, all the girls promenading the piazzas, as was their wont, with arms entwining each other's waists, came flocking about the south steps. When Miss Stanley appeared in her riding habit and was quickly swung up into saddle by her cavalier, and then, with a bright nod and smile for the entire group she gathered the reins in her practised hand and rode briskly away, the sentiments of the fair spectators were best expressed, perhaps, in the remark of Miss McKay:

"What a shame it is that the cadets can't ride! I mean can't ride—*that* way," she explained with suggestive nod of her curly head toward the pair just trotting out upon the road around the Plain. "They ride—lots of them—better than most of the officers."

"Mr. Stanley for instance," suggests a mischievous little minx with hazel eyes and laughter-loving mouth.

"Yes, Mr. Stanley, or Mr. Pennock, or Mr. Burton, or a dozen others I could name, not excepting my brother," answers Miss Nan, stoutly, although those readily flushing cheeks of hers promptly throw out their signals of perturbation. "Fancy Mr. Lee vaulting over his horse at the gallop as they do."

"And yet Mr. Lee has taught them so much more than other instructors. Sev-

eral cadets have told me so. He always does, first, everything he requires them to do; so he must be able to make that vault."

"Will doesn't say so by any means," retorts Nannie with something very like a pout; and as Will is a prime favorite with the entire party and the center of a wide circle of interest, sympathy and anxiety in those girlish hearts, their loyalty is proof against opinions that may not coincide with his. "Miss Mischief" reads temporary defeat in the circle of bright faces and is stung to new effort:

"Well! there are cadets whose opinions you value quite as much as you do your brother's, Nannie, and they have told me."

"Who?" challenges Miss Nan, yet with averted face. Thrice of late she has disagreed with Mr. Stanley about Willy's troubles; has said things to him which she wishes she had left unsaid; and for two days now he has not sought her side as heretofore, though she knows he has been at the hotel to see his sister, and a little bird has told her he had a long talk with this same hazel-eyed girl. She wants to know more about it—yet does not want to ask.

"Phil Stanley, for one," is the not unexpected answer.

Somebody who appears to know all about it has written that when a girl is beginning to feel deep interest in a man she will say things decidedly detrimental to his character solely for the purpose of having them denied, and for the pleasure of hearing him defended. Is it this that prompts Miss McKay to retort:

"Mr. Stanley cares too little what his classmates think, and too much of what Mr. Lee may say or do."

"Mr. Stanley isn't the only one who thinks a deal of Lieutenant Lee," is the spirited answer. "Mr. Burton says he is the most popular tactical officer here, and many a cadet—good friends of your brother's, Nannie, has said the same thing. You don't like him because Will doesn't."

"I wouldn't like or respect any officer who reports cadets on suspicion," is the stout reply. "If he did that to any one else I would despise it as much as I do because Willy is the victim."

The discussion is waxing hot. "Miss Mischief's" blood is up. She likes Phil Stanley; she likes Mr. Lee; she has hosts of friends in the corps, and she is just as loyal and quite as pronounced in her views as her little adversary. They are fond of each other, too, and were great chums all through the previous summer; but there is danger of a quarrel to-day.

"I don't think you are just in that matter at all, Nannie; I have heard cadets say that if they had been in Mr. Lee's place or on officer-of-the-day duty they would have had to give Will that report you take so much to heart. Everybody knows his voice. Half the corps heard him call out to Mr. Pennock."

"I don't believe a single cadet who's a friend of Will's would say such a thing," bursts in Miss Nan, her eyes blazing.

"He is a friend—and a warm friend, too."

"You said there were several, Kitty, and I don't believe it possible."

"Well. There were two or three. If you don't believe it, you can ask Mr. Stanley. *He* said it, and the others agreed."

Fancy the mood in which she meets him this particular evening, when his card was brought to her door. Twice has "Miss Mischief" essayed to enter the room and "make up." Conscience has been telling her savagely that in the impulse and sting of the moment, she has given an unfair coloring to the whole matter. Mr. Stanley had volunteered no such remark as that she so vehemently quoted. Asked point blank whether he considered as given "on suspicion," the report which Mrs. McKay and Nannie so resented, he replied that he did not; and, when further pressed, he said that Will alone was blamable in the matter: Mr. Lee had no alternative, if it was Mr. Lee who gave the report, and any other officer would have been compelled to do the same. All this "Miss Mischief" would gladly have explained to Nannie could she have gained admission, but the latter "had a splitting headache," and begged to be excused.

It has been such a lovely afternoon. The halls were filled with cadets "on permit," when she came out from the dining-room, but nothing but ill-luck

seemed to attend her. The young gentleman who had invited her to walk to Fort Putnam, most provokingly twisted an ankle at cavalry drill that very morning, and was sent to hospital. *Now*, if Mr. Stanley were all devotion, he would promptly tender his services as substitute. Then she could take him to task and panish him for his disloyalty to Will. But Mr. Stanley was not to be seen: "Gone off with another girl," was the announcement made to her by Mr. Werrick, a youth who dearly loved a joke, and who saw no need of explaining that the other girl was his own sister. Sorely disappointed, yet hardly knowing why, she accepted her mother's invitation to go with her to the barracks where Will was promenading the area on what Mr. Werrick called "one of his perennial punishment tours." She went, of course; but the distant sight of poor Will, duly equipped as a sentry, dismally tramping up and down the asphalt, added fuel to the inward fire that consumed her. The mother's heart, too, yearned over her boy—a victim to cruel regulations and crueler task-masters. "What was the use of the government's enticing young men away from their comfortable homes," Mrs. McKay had once indignantly written, "unless it could make them happy?" It was a question the "tactical department" could not answer, but it thought volumes.

But now evening had come, and with it Mr. Stanley's card. Nan's heart gave a bound, but she went down-stairs with due deliberation. She had his card in her hand as she reached the hall, and was twisting it in her fingers. Yes. There he stood on the north piazza—Pennock with him, and one or two others of the graduating class. They were chatting laughingly with Miss Stanley, "Miss Mischief," a bevy of girls and a matron or two, but she knew well his eyes would be on watch for her. They were. He saw her instantly; bowed, smiled, but to her surprise, continued his conversation with a lady seated near the door. What could it mean? Irresolute she stood there a moment, waiting for him to come forward; but though she saw that twice his eyes sought hers, he was still bending courteously and listening to the voluble words of the somewhat elderly dame who claimed his attention. Nan began to rebel against that woman from the bottom of her heart. What was she to do? Here was his card. In response she had come down to receive him. She meant to be very cool from the first moment; to provoke him to inquiry as to the cause of such unusual conduct, and then to upbraid him for his disloyalty to her brother. She certainly meant that he should feel the weight of her displeasure; but then—then—after he had been made to suffer, if he was properly contrite, and said so, and looked it, and begged to be forgiven, why then, perhaps she might be brought to condone it in a measure and be good friends again. It was clearly his duty, however, to come and greet her, not hers to go to the laughing group. The old lady was the only one among them whom she did not know—a new arrival. Just then Miss Stanley looked round; saw her and signaled smilingly to her to come and join them. Slowly she walked toward the little party, still twirling the card in her taper fingers.

"Looking for anybody, Nan?" blithely hails "Miss Mischief." "Who is it? I see you have his card."

For once Nannie's voice fails her, and she knows not what to say. Before she can frame an answer there is a rustle of skirts and a light footfall behind her, and she hears the voice of a girl whom she never has liked one bit.

"Oh! You're here, are you, Mr. Stanley! Why, I've been waiting at least a quarter of an hour. Did you send up your card?"

"I did; full ten minutes ago. Was it not brought to your room?"

"No, indeed! I've been sitting there writing, and only came down because I had promised Mr. Fearn that he should have ten minutes, and it is nearly his time now. Where do you suppose they could have sent it?"

Poor little Nan! It has been a hard day for her, but this is just too much. She turns quickly, and, hardly knowing whither she goes, dodges past the party of cadets and girls now blocking the stairway and preventing flight to her room; hurries out the south door and around to the west piazza, and there, leaning against a pillar, is striving to

hide her blazing cheeks—all in less than a minute.

Stanley sees through the entire situation with the quick intuition of a lover. She has not treated him kindly of late. She has been capricious and unjust on several occasions, but there is no time to think of that now. She is in distress—and that is more than enough for him.

"Here comes Mr. Fearn himself to claim his walk, so I will go and find out about the card," he says, and blesses that little rat of a bell-boy as he hastens away.

Out on the piazza he finds her alone, yet with half a dozen people hovering nigh. The hush of twilight is over the beautiful old Point. The moist breath of the coming night, cool and sweet, floats down upon them from the deep gorges on the rugged flank of Cro' Nest, and rises from the thickly lacing branches of the cedars on the river bank below. A flawless mirror in its grand and reflected framework of cliff and crag and beetling precipice, the Hudson stretches away northward unruffled by the faintest cat's-paw of a breeze. Far beyond the huge black battlements of Storm King and the purpled scaur of Breakneck the night lights of the distant city are twinkling through the gathering darkness, and tiny dots of silvery flame down in the cool depths beneath them reflect the faint glimmer from the cloudless heaven where——

"The sentinel stars set their watch in the sky."

The hush of the sacred hour has fallen on every lip save those of the merry party in the hall, where laugh and chatter and flaring gas-light bid defiance to influences such as hold their sway over souls brought face to face with Nature in this, her loveliest haunt on earth.

Phil Stanley's heart is throbbing as he steps quickly to her side. Well, indeed, she knows his footfall; knows he is coming; almost knows *why* he comes. She is burning with a sense of humiliation, wounded pride, maidenly wrath and displeasure. All day long everything has gone agley. Could she but flee to her room and hide her flaming cheeks and cry her heart out, it would be relief inexpressible, but her retreat is cut off. She cannot escape. She cannot face those keen-eyed watchers in the hallways. Oh! it is almost maddening that she should have been so—so fooled! Every one must know she came down to meet Phil Stanley when his card was meant for another girl—that girl of all others! All aflame with indignation as she is, she yet means to freeze him if she can only control herself.

"Miss Nannie," he murmurs, quick and low, "I see that a blunder has been made, but I don't believe the others saw it. Give me just a few minutes. Come down the walk with me. I cannot talk with you here—now, and there is so much I want to say." He bends over her pleadingly, but her eyes are fixed far away up the dark wooded valley beyond the white shafts of the cemetery, gleaming in the first beams of the rising moon. She makes no reply for a moment. She does not withdraw them when finally she answers, impressively:

"Thank you, Mr. Stanley, but I must be excused from interfering with your engagements."

"There is no engagement now," he promptly replies; "and I greatly want to speak with you. Have you been quite kind to me of late? Have I not a right to know what has brought about the change?"

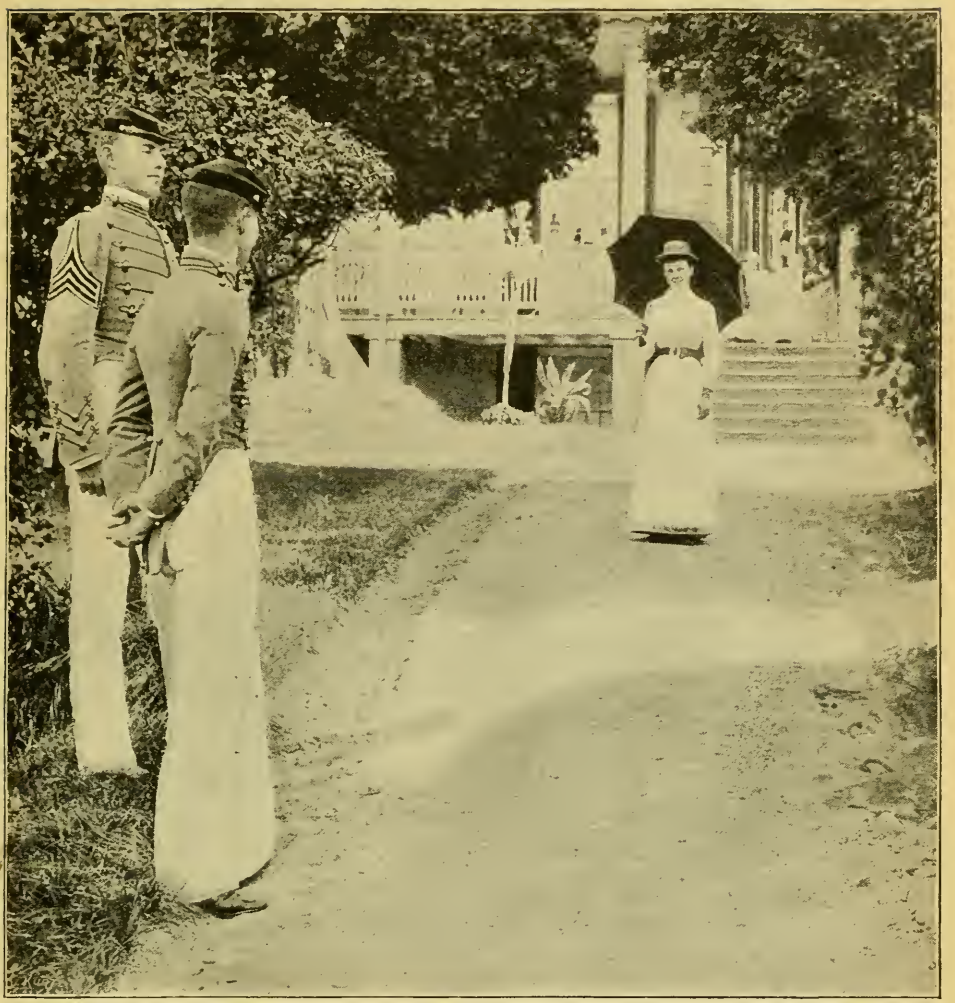
"You do not seem to have sought opportunity to inquire,"—very cool and dignified now.

"Pardon me. Three times this week I have asked for a walk—and you have had previous engagements."

She has torn to bits and thrown away the card that was in her hand. Now she is tugging at the bunch of bell buttons, each graven with the monogram of some cadet friend, that hangs as usual by its tiny golden chain. She wants to say that he has found speedy consolation in the society of "that other girl" of whom Mr. Werrick spoke, but not for the world would she seem jealous.

"You could have seen me this afternoon, had there been any matters you wished explained," she says. "I presume you were more agreeably occupied."

"I find no delight in formal visits," he answers quietly; "but my sister wished to return calls and asked me to show her about the post."



"WHEN THE CADET UNIFORMS BEGAN TO APPEAR AT THE LEDGE SHE WOULD GO TRIPPING DOWN THE PATH."

Then it was his sister. Not "that other girl!" Still she must not let him see it makes her glad. She needs a pretext for her wrath. She must make him feel it in some way. This is not at all in accordance with the mental private rehearsals she has been having. There is still that direful matter of Will's report for "shouting from window of barracks," and "Miss Mischief's" equally direful report of Mr. Stanley's remarks thereon.

"I thought you were a loyal friend of Willy's," she says, turning suddenly upon him.

"I was—and am," he answers simply.

"And yet I'm told you said it was all his own fault, and that you yourself would have given him the report that so nearly 'found him on demerit.' A report on suspicion, too," she adds with scorn in her tone.

Mr. Stanley is silent a moment.

"You have heard a very unfair account of my words," he says at last. "I have volunteered no opinions on the subject. In answer to direct question I have said that it was not justifiable to call that a report on suspicion."

"But you said you would have given it yourself."

"I said that as officer-of-the-day I

would have been compelled to do so. I could not have signed my certificate otherwise."

She turns away in speechless indignation. What makes it all well nigh intolerable is that he is by no means on the defensive. He is patient, gentle, but decidedly superior. Not at all what she wanted. Not at all eager to explain, argue or implore. Not at all the tearful penitent she has pictured in her plans. She must bring him to a realizing sense of the enormity of his conduct. Disloyalty to Will is treason to her.

"And yet—you say you have kept, and that you value, that knot of blue ribbon that I gave you—or that you took—last summer. I did not suppose that you would so soon prove to be—no friend to Willy, or——"

"Or what, Miss Nannie?" he asks. His face is growing white, but he controls the tremor in his voice. She does not see. Her eyes are downcast and her face averted now, but she goes on desperately.

"Well, never mind *that* now; but it seems to me that such friendship is—simply worthless."

She has taken the plunge and said her say, but the last words are spoken with sinking inflection, followed instantly by a sinking heart. He makes no answer whatever. She dares not look up into his face to see the effect of her stab. He stands there silent only an instant; then raises his cap, turns and leaves her.

Sunday comes and goes without a sight of him except in the line of officers at parade. That night she goes early to her room—and on the bureau finds a little box securely tied, sealed and addressed to her in his well known hand. It contains a note and some soft object carefully wrapped in tissue paper. The note is brief enough:

"It is not easy to part with this, for it is all I have that was yours to give, but even this must be returned to you after what you said last night.

"Miss Nannie, you may sometime think more highly of my friendship for your brother than you do now, and then, perhaps, will realize that you were very unjust. Should that time come I shall be glad to have this again."

It was hardly necessary to open the little packet, as she did. She knew well enough it could contain only that

"Knot of ribbon blue."

IV.

JUNE is here. The examinations are in full blast. The Point is thronged with visitors and every hostelrie in the neighborhood has opened wide its doors to accommodate the swarms of people interested in the graduating exercises and eager for the graduating ball. Pretty girls there are in force, and at Craney's they are living three and four in a room; the joy of being really there on the Point, near the cadets, aroused by the morning gun and shrill piping of the reveille, saluted hourly by the notes of the bugle, enabled to see the gray uniforms half a dozen times a day and to actually speak or walk with the wearers half an hour out of twenty-four whole ones, being apparent compensation for any crowding or discomfort. Indeed, crowded as they are, the girls at Craney's are objects of boundless envy to those whom the Fates have consigned to the resorts down around the picturesque but distant "Falls." There is a little coterie at "Hawkshurst" that is fiercely jealous of the sisterhood in the favored nook at the north edge of the Plain, and one of their number, who is believed to have completely subjugated that universal favorite, Cadet McKay, has been heard to say that she thought it an outrage that they had to come home so early in the evening and mope away the time without a single cadet, when up there at Craney's the halls and piazzas were full of gray-coats and bell buttons every night until tattoo.

A very brilliant and pretty girl she is, too, and neither Mrs. McKay nor Nannie can wonder at it that Will's few leisure moments are monopolized. "You are going to have me all to yourself next week, little mother," he laughingly explains; "and goodness knows when I'm going to see Miss Waring again." And though neither mother nor sister is at all satisfied with the state of affairs, both are too unselfish to interpose. How many an hour have mothers and, sometimes, sisters, waited in loneliness at the old hotel for boys whom some other

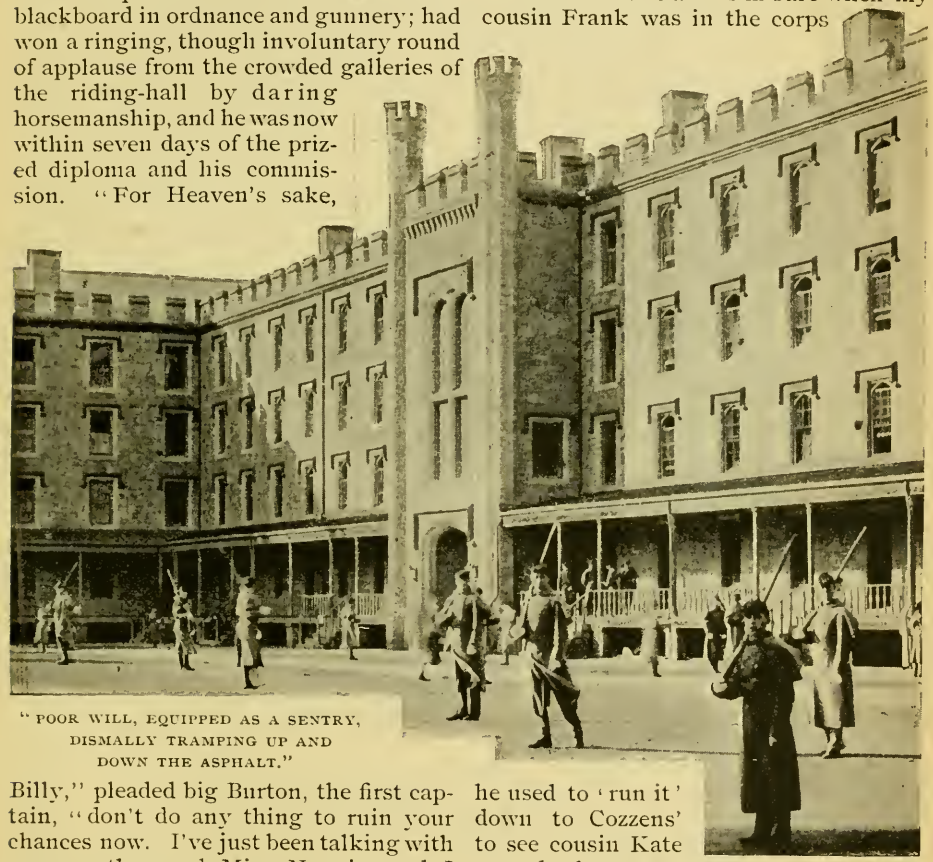
fellow's sister was holding in silken fetters somewhere down in shady "Flirtation!"

It was with relief inexpressible that Mrs. McKay and Uncle Jack had hailed the coming of the 1st of June. With a margin of only two demerit Will had safely weathered the reefs and was practically safe—safe at last. He had passed brilliantly in engineering; had been saved by his prompt and ready answers, the consequences of a "fess" with clean blackboard in ordnance and gunnery; had won a ringing, though involuntary round of applause from the crowded galleries of the riding-hall by daring horsemanship, and he was now within seven days of the prized diploma and his commission. "For Heaven's sake, Billy," pleaded big Burton, the first captain, "don't do any thing to ruin your chances now. I've just been talking with your mother and Miss Nannie, and I declare I never saw that little sister of yours looking so white and worried."

McKay laughs, yet his laugh is not light-hearted. He wonders if Burton has the faintest intuition that at this moment he is planning an escapade that means nothing short of dismissal if detected. Down in the bottom of his soul he knows he is a fool to have made the rash and boastful pledge to which he now stands committed. Yet he has never "backed out" before, and now—he would dare a dozen dismissals rather than that she should have a chance to say "I knew you would not come."

That very afternoon, just after the ride in the hall, before the Board of Visitors, Miss Waring had been pathetically lamenting that with another week they were to part, and that she had seen next to nothing of him since her arrival.

"If you only *could* get down to Hawkshurst!" she cried. "I'm sure when my cousin Frank was in the corps he used to 'run it' down to Cozzens' to see cousin Kate—and that was what made her cousin Kate to me," she adds with sudden dropping of the eyelids that is wondrously effective.



"POOR WILL, EQUIPPED AS A SENTRY, DISMALLY TRAMPING UP AND DOWN THE ASPHALT."

"Easily done!" recklessly answers McKay, whose boyish heart is set to hammer-like beating by the closing sentence. "I didn't know you sat up so late there, or I would have come before. Of course I *have* to be here at 'taps.' No one can escape that."

"Oh—but really, Mr. McKay, I did

not mean it! I would not have you run such a risk for worlds! I meant—some other way." And so she protests, although her eyes dance with excitement and delight. What a feather this in her cap of coquetry! What a triumph over the other girls—especially that hateful set at Craney's! What a delicious confidence to impart to all the little coterie at Hawkshurst! How they must envy her the romance, the danger, the daring, the devotion of such an adventure—for her sake! Of late years such tales had been rare. Girls worth the winning simply would not permit so rash a project, and their example carried weight. But here at "Hawkshurst" was a lively young brood, chaperoned by a matron as wild as her charges, and but little older; and eager one and all for any glory or distinction that could pique the pride or stir the envy of "that Craney set." It was too much for a girl of Sallie Waring's type. Her eyes have a dangerous gleam, her cheeks a witching glow; she clings tighter to his arm as she looks up in his face.

"And yet—wouldn't it be lovely?—To think of seeing you there!—Are you sure there'd be no danger?"

"Be on the north piazza about quarter of eleven," is the prompt reply. "I'll wear a dark suit, eye-glass, brown mustache, etc. Call me Mr. Freeman while strangers are around. There goes the parade drum. *Au revoir*," and he darts away. Cadet Captain Stanley, inspecting his company a few moments later, stops in front and gravely rebukes him:

"You are not properly shaved, McKay."

"I shaved this morning," is the somewhat sullen reply, while an angry flush shoots up toward the blue eyes.

"No razor has touched your upper lip, however, and I expect the class to observe regulations in this company, demerit or no demerit," is the firm, quiet answer, and the young captain passes on to the next man. McKay grits his teeth.

"Only a week more of it, thank God!" he mutters when sure that Stanley is beyond ear-shot.

Three hours more and "taps" is sounded. All along the brilliant *façade* of barracks there is sudden and simultaneous "dousing of the glim" and a rush of the cadets to their narrow nests. There is a minute of banging doors and hurrying footsteps, and gruff queries of "All in?" as the cadet officers flit from room to room in each division to see that lights are out and every man in bed. Then forth they come from every hallway; tripping lightly down the stone steps and converging on the guard-house, where stand at the doorway the dark forms of the officer-in-charge and the cadet officer-of-the-day. Each in turn halts, salutes, and makes his precise report; and when the last sub-division is reported, the executive officer is assured that the battalion of cadets is present in barracks, and, at the moment of inspection at least, in bed. Presumably they remain so.

Two minutes after inspection, however, Mr. McKay is out of bed again and fumbling about in his alcove. His room-mate sleepily inquires from beyond the partition what he wants in the dark, but is too long accustomed to his vagaries to expect definite information. When Mr. McKay slips softly out into the hall, after careful *reconnaissance* of the guard-house windows, his chum is sound asleep and dreaming of no worse freak on Billy's part than a raid around barracks.

It is so near graduation that the rules are relaxed and in every first classman's room the tailor's handiwork is hanging among the gray uniforms. It is a dark suit of this civilian dress that Billy dons as he emerges from the blankets. A natty Derby is perched upon his curly pate, and a *monocle* hangs by its string. But he cannot light his gas and arrange the soft brown mustache with which he proposes to decorate his upper lip. He must run into Stanley's—the "tower" room, at the north end of his hall.

Phil looks up from the copy of "Military Law," which he is diligently studying. As "inspector of sub-division," his light is burned until eleven.

"You *do* make an uncommonly swell young cit, Billy," he says pleasantly. "Doesn't he, Mack?" he continues, appealing to his room-mate, who, lying flat on his back with his head toward the light, and a pair of muscular legs in white trowsers displayed on top of a pile of blankets, is striving to make out the

"IN SILKEN FETTERS ON 'FLIRTATION.'"

vacancies in a recent Army Register. "Mack" rolls over and lazily expresses his approval.

"I'd do pretty well if I had my mustache out; I meant to get the start of you fellows, but you're so meanly jealous, you blocked the game, Stan."

All the rancor is gone now. He well knows that Stanley was right.

"Sorry to have had to 'row' you about that, Billy," says the captain, gently. "You know I can't let one man go and not a dozen others."

"Oh, hang it all! What's the difference when time's so nearly up?" responds McKay, as he goes over to the little wood-framed mirror that stands on the iron mantel. "Here's a substitute, though! How's this for a mustache?" he asks as he turns and faces them. Then he starts for the door. Almost in an in-

stant Stanley is up and after him. Just at the head of the iron stairs he hails and halts him.

"Billy. You are not going out of barracks?"

Unwillingly McKay yields to the pressure of the firm hand laid on his shoulder, and turns.

"Suppose I were, Stanley. What danger is there? Lee inspected last night, and even he wouldn't make such a plan to trip me. Who ever heard of a 'tack's' inspecting after taps two successive nights?"

"There's no reason why it should not be done, and several reasons why it should," is the uncompromising reply. "Don't risk your commission now, Billy, in any mad scheme. Come back and take those things off. Come!"

"Blatherskite! Don't hang on to me like a pickpocket, Stan. Let me go," says McKay, half vexed, half laughing. "I've *got* to go, man," he says more seriously. "I've promised."

A sudden light seems to come to Stanley. Even in the feeble gleam from the gas-jet in the lower hall, McKay can see the look of consternation that shoots across his face.

"You don't mean—you're not going down to 'Hawkshurst,' Billy?"

"Why not to Hawkshurst, if anywhere at all?" is the sullen reply.

"Why? Because you are risking your whole future—your profession, your good name, McKay. You're risking your mother's heart for the sport of a girl who is simply toying with you——"

"Take care, Stanley. Say what you like to me about myself—but not a word about her."

"This is no time for sentiment, McKay. I have known Miss Waring three years; you, perhaps three weeks. I tell you solemnly that if she has tempted you to 'run it' down there to see her it is simply to boast of a new triumph to the silly pack by whom she is surrounded. I tell you, she——"

"You tell me nothing! I don't allow any man to speak in that way of a woman who is my friend," says Billy, with much majesty of mien. "Take your hand off, Stanley," he adds coldly. "I might have had some respect for your counsel if you had had the least—for my feelings." And wrenching his shoulder away, McKay speeds quickly down the stairs, leaving his comrade speechless and sorrowing in the darkness above.

In the lower hall he stops and peers cautiously over toward the guard-house. The lights are burning brilliantly up in the room of the officer-in-charge, and the red sash of the officer-of-the-day shows through the open door-way beneath. Now is his time, for there is no one looking. One quick leap through the dim stream of light from the lantern at his back and he will be in the dark area, and can pick his noiseless way to the shadows beyond. It is an easy thing to gain the footpath beyond the old retaining wall back of the guard-house, scud away under the trees along the winding ascent toward Fort Putnam, until he meets the back-road half way up the heights; then turn southward through the rocky cuts and forest aisles until he reaches the main highway; then follow on through the beautiful groves, through the quiet village, across the bridge that spans the stream above the falls, and then, only a few hundred yards beyond, there lies Hawkshurst and its bevy of excited, whispering, applauding, delighted girls. If he meet officers, all he has to do is put on a bold face and trust to his disguise. He means to have a glorious time and be back tingling with satisfaction on his exploit, by a little after midnight. In five minutes his quarrel with Stanley is forgotten, and, all alert and eager, he is half way up the heights and out of sight or hearing of the barracks.

The roads are well nigh deserted. He meets one or two squads of soldiers coming back from "pass" at the Falls, but no one else. The omnibuses and carriages bearing home those visitors who have spent the evening listening to the band at the Point are all by this time out of the way, and it is early for officers to be returning from evening calls at the lower hotel. The chances are two to one that he will pass the village without obstacle of any kind. Billy's spirits rise with the occasion, and he concludes that a cigarette is the one thing needful to complete his disguise and add to the general nonchalance of his appearance. Having no matches he waits until he reaches the northern outskirts of "the Falls," and

then steps boldly into the first bar he sees and helps himself.

Coming forth again he throws wide open the swinging screen doors, and a broad belt of light is flashed across the dusty highway just in front of a rapidly driven carriage coming north. The mettlesome horses swerve and shy. The occupants are suddenly whirled from their reposeful attitudes, though, fortunately, not from their seats. A "top hat" goes spinning out into the roadway, and a fan flies through the midst of the glare. The driver promptly checks his team and backs them just as Billy, all impulsive courtesy, leaps out into the street; picks up the hat with one hand, the fan with the other, and restores them with a bow to their owners. Only in the nick of time does he recollect himself, and crush down the jovial impulse to hail by name Colonel Stanley and his daughter Miriam. The sight of a cavalry uniform and Lieutenant Lee's tall figure on the forward seat has, however, its restraining influence, and he turns quickly away—unrecognized.

But alas for Billy! Only two days before had the distribution been made, and every man in the graduating class was already wearing the beautiful token of their brotherhood. The civilian garb, the Derby hat, the *monocle*, the stick, the cigarette and the false mustache were all very well in their way, but in the beam of light from the windows of that ill-starred saloon there flashed upon his hand a gem that two pairs of quick, though reluctant eyes, could not and did not fail to see—the class ring of 187-.

V.

There was a sense of constraint among the occupants of Colonel Stanley's carriage as they were driven back to the Point. They had been calling on old friends of his among the pretty villas below the Falls; had been chatting joyously until that sudden swerve that pitched the colonel's hat and Miriam's fan into the dust, and the veteran cavalryman could not account for the lull that followed. Miriam had instantly grasped the situation. All her father's stories of cadet days had enabled her to understand at once that here was a cadet—a classmate of Philip's—"running it" in disguise. Mr. Lee, of course, needed no information on the subject. What she hoped was, that he had not seen; but the cloud on his frank, handsome face still hovered there, and she knew him too well not to see that he understood everything. And now what was his duty? Something told her that an inspection of barracks would be made immediately upon his return to the Point, and in that way the name of the absentee be discovered. She knew the regulation every cadet was expected to obey and every officer on honor to enforce. She knew that every cadet found absent from his quarters after taps was called upon by the commandant for prompt account of his whereabouts, and if unable to say that he was on cadet limits during the period of his absence, dismissal stared him in the face.

The colonel did most of the talking on the way back to the south gate. Once within the portals he called to the driver to stop at the Mess. "I'm thirsty," said the jovial warrior, "and I want a julep and a fresh cigar. You, too, might have a claret punch, Mimi; you are drooping a little to-night. What is it, daughter, —tired?"

"Yes, tired and a little headachy." Then sudden thought occurs to her. "If you don't mind I think I will go right on to the hotel. Then you and Mr. Lee can enjoy your cigars at leisure." She knows well that Romney Lee is just the last man to let her drive on unescorted. She can hold him ten or fifteen minutes, at least, and by that time if the reckless boy down the road has taken warning and scurried back he can reach the barracks before inspection is made.

"Indeed, Miss Miriam, I'm not to be disposed of so summarily," he promptly answers. "I'll see you safely to the hotel. You'll excuse me, colonel?"

"Certainly, certainly, Lee. I suppose I'll see you later," responds the veteran. They leave him at the Mess and resume their way, and Lee takes the vacated seat by her side. There is something he longs to say to her—something that has been quivering on his lips and throbbing at his heart for many a long day. She is a queenly woman—this dark-eyed, stately army girl. It is only two years since,

her school days finished, she has returned to her father's roof on the far frontier and resumed the gay garrison life that so charmed her when a child. *Then* a loving mother had been her guide, but during her long sojourn at school the blow had fallen that so wrenched her father's heart and left her motherless. Since her graduation she alone has been the joy of the old soldier's home, and sunshine and beauty have again gladdened his life. She would be less than woman did she not know that here now was another soldier, brave, courteous and gentle, who longed to win her from that home to his own—to call her by the sacred name of wife. She knew how her father trusted, and Phil looked up to him. She knew that down in her own heart of hearts there was pleading for him even now, but as yet no word has been spoken. She is not the girl to signal, "speak—and the prize is yours." He has looked in vain for symptom that bids him hope for more than loyal friendship.

But to-night as they reach the brightly lighted piazza at Craney's it is she who bids him stay.

"Don't go just yet," she falters.

"I feared you were tired and wished to go to your room," he answers gently.

"Would you mind asking if there are letters for me?" she says. It is anything to gain time, and he goes at her behest, but—O luckless fate! 'tis a false move.

She sees him stride away through the groups on the piazza; sees the commandant meet him with one of his assistants; sees that there is earnest consultation in low tone, and that then the others hasten down the steps and disappear in the darkness. She hears him say, "I'll follow in a moment, sir," and something tells her that what she dreads has come to pass. Presently he returns to her with the information that there are no letters; then raises his cap, and, in the old Southern and cadet fashion, extends his hand.

"You are not going, Mr. Lee," again she falters.

"I have to, Miss Stanley."

Slowly she puts forth her hand and lays it in his.

"I—I wish you did not have to go. —*Tell* me!" she says, impulsively—imploringly, "are you going to inspect?"

He bows his head.

"It is already ordered, Miss Miriam," he says, "I must go at once. Good-night."

Dazed and distressed she turns at once, and is confronted by a pallid little maid with wild, blue eyes.

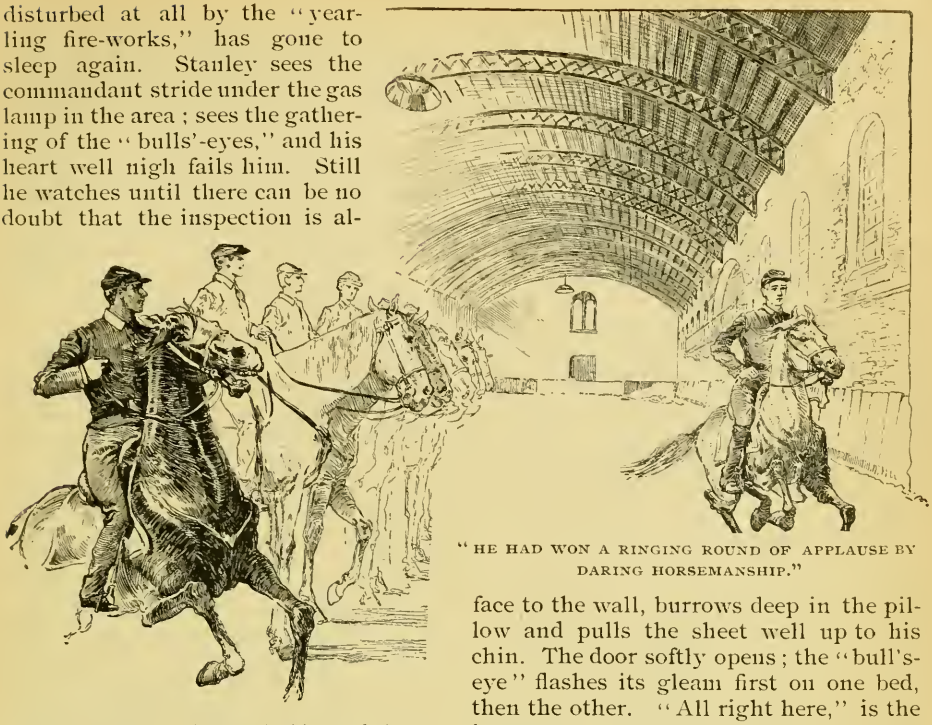
"O Miss Stanley!" is the wail that greets her. "I could not help hearing, and—if it should be Willy!"

"Come with me, Nannie," she whispers, as her arm enfolds her. "Come to my room."

Meantime there has been a breeze at the barracks. A batch of yearlings, by way of celebrating their release from plebedom, have hit on a time honored scheme. Just about the same moment that disclosed to the eyes of Lieutenant Lee the class-ring gleaming on the finger of that nattily dressed young civilian, his comrade, the dozing officer-in-charge, was started to his feet by a thunder clap, a vivid flash that lighted up the whole area of barracks, and an explosion that rattled the plaster in the guard-house chimneys. One thing the commandant wouldn't stand was, disorder after "taps," and, in accordance with strict instructions, Lieutenant Lawrence sent a drummer boy at once to find the colonel and tell him what had taken place, while he himself stirred up the cadet officer-of-the-day and began an investigation. Half the corps by this time were up and chuckling with glee at their darkened windows; and as these subdued but still audible demonstrations of sympathy and satisfaction did not cease on his arrival, the colonel promptly sent for his entire force of assistants to conduct the inspection already ordered. Already one or two "bulls'-eyes" were flitting out from the officers' angle.

But the piece of boyish mischief that brings such keen delight to the youngsters in the battalion strikes terror to the heart of Philip Stanley. He knows all too well that an immediate inspection will be the result, and then, what is to become of McKay? With keen anxiety, he goes to the hall window overlooking the area, and watches the course of events. A peep into McKay's room shows that he is still absent and that his room-mate, if

disturbed at all by the "yearling fire-works," has gone to sleep again. Stanley sees the commandant stride under the gas lamp in the area; sees the gathering of the "bulls'-eyes," and his heart well nigh fails him. Still he watches until there can be no doubt that the inspection is al-



"HE HAD WON A RINGING ROUND OF APPLAUSE BY DARING HORSEMANSHIP."

ready begun. Then, half credulous—all delighted—he notes that it is not Mr. Lee, but young Mr. Lawrence—the officer-in-charge, who is coming straight toward "B" Company, lantern in hand. Not waiting for the coming of the former, the colonel has directed another officer—not a company commander—to inspect for him.

There is but one way to save Billy now.

In less than half a minute Stanley has darted into McKay's room; has slung his chevroned coat beneath the bed; has slipped beneath the sheet and coverlet, and now, breathlessly, he listens. He hears the inspector moving from room to room on the ground floor; hears him springing up the iron stair; hears him enter his own—the tower room at the north end of the hall, and there he stops—surprised, evidently, to find Cadet Captain Stanley absent from his quarters. Then his steps are heard again. He enters the opposite room at the north end. That is all right! and now he's coming here. "Now for it!" says Stanley to himself, as he throws his white sleeved arm over his head just as he has so often seen Billy do, and turning his face to the wall, burrows deep in the pillow and pulls the sheet well up to his chin. The door softly opens; the "bull's-eye" flashes its gleam first on one bed, then the other. "All right here," is the inspector's mental verdict as he pops out again suddenly as he entered. Billy McKay, the scapegrace, is safe, and Stanley has time to think over the situation.

At the very worst, as he will be able to say he was "visiting in barracks" when found absent, his own punishment will not be serious. But this is not what troubles him. Demerit for the graduating class ceases to count after the 1st of June, and the individual sense of honor and duty is about the only restraint against lapses of discipline. Stanley hates to think that others may now believe him deaf to this obligation. He would far rather have had this happen when demerit and "confinements" in due proportion had been his award, but there is no use repining. It is a sacrifice to save—her brother.

When half an hour later his class-mate, the officer-of-the-day, enters the tower room in search of him, Stanley is there and calmly says, "I was visiting in barracks," in answer to his question; and finally when morning comes, Mr. Billy McKay nearly sleeps through reveille as a consequence of his night prowling; but his absence, despite the simultaneous in-

spection of every company in barracks, has not been detected. With one exception every bed has had its apparently soundly sleeping occupant. The young scamps who caused all the trouble have escaped Scot free, and the corps can hardly believe their own ears, and Billy McKay is stunned and perplexed when it is noised abroad that the only man "hived absent," was the captain of Company "B."

It so happens that both times he goes to find Stanley that day, he misses him. "The commandant sent for him an hour ago," says Mr. McFarland, his roommate, "and I'm blessed if I know what keeps him. Something about last night's doings, I'm afraid."

This, in itself, is enough to make him worry, but the next thing he hears is worse. Just at evening call to quarters, Jim Burton comes to his room.

"Have you heard anything about this report of Stanley's last night?" he asks, and McKay, ordinarily so frank, is guarded now in his reply. For half an hour he has been pacing his room alone. McFarland's revelations have set him to thinking. It is evident that the colonel's suspicions are aroused. It is probable that it is known that some cadet was "running it" the night before. From the simple fact that he is not already in arrest he knows that Mr. Lee did not recognize him, yet the secret has leaked out in some way, and an effort is being made to discover the culprit. Already he has begun to wonder if the game was really worth the candle. He saw her, 'tis true, and had half an hour's whispered chat with her, interrupted not infrequently by giggling, and impetuous rushes from the other girls. They had sworn melodramatically never to reveal that it was he who came, but Billy begins to have his doubts. "It ends my career if I'm found out," he reflects, "whereas they can't do much to Stan. for visiting." And thus communing with himself, he has decided to guard his secret against all comers—at least for the present. And so he is non-committal in his reply to Burton.

"What about it?" he asks.

"Why, it's simply this, Billy: Little Magee the fifer is on orderly duty to-day, and he heard much of the talk, and I got it out of him. Somebody was running it last night—and was seen down by Cozzen's gate. Stanley was the only absentee, hence Stanley would naturally be the man suspected, but he says he wasn't out of the barracks. The conclusion is inevitable that he was filling the other fellow's place, and the colonel is hopping mad. It looks as though there were collusion between them. Now, Billy, all I've got to say is that the man he's shielding ought to step forward and relieve him at once. There comes the sentry and I must go."

Relieve him? Yes; but what means that for me? thinks poor McKay. Dismissal; a heart break for mother.—No! It is too much to face; he must think it over. He never goes near Stanley all that night. He fears to meet him, or the morrow. His heart misgives him when he is told that there has been a long conference in the office. He turns white with apprehension when they fall in for parade, and he notes that it is Phillips, their first-lieutenant, who draws sword and takes command of the company; but a few moments later his heart gives one wild bound, then seems to sink into the ground beneath his feet, when the adjutant drops the point of his sword; lets it dangle by the gold knot at his wrist; whips a folded paper from his sash, and far over the plain his clear young voice proclaims the stern order:

"Cadet Captain Stanley is hereby placed in arrest and confined to his quarters. Charge—conniving at concealing the absence of a cadet from inspection after 'taps,' eleven—eleven-fifteen P.M., on 7th instant.

"By order of Lieut.-Colonel Putnam."

VI.

THE blithest day of all the year has come. The graduating ball takes place to-night. The Point is thronged with joyous visitors, and yet over all there hovers a shadow. In the midst of all this gayety and congratulation there hides a core of sorrow. Voices lower and soft eyes turn in sympathy when certain sad faces are seen. There is one subject on which the cadets simply refuse to talk, and there are two of the graduating class who do not appear at the hotel at all. One is Mr. McKay, whose absence is al-

leged to be because of confinements he has to serve. The other is Philip Stanley, still in close arrest, and the latter has cancelled his engagements for the ball.

There had been a few days in which Miss McKay, forgetting or having obtained absolution for her unguarded remarks on the promenade deck of the steamer, had begun to be seen a great deal with Miss Stanley. She had even blushingly shaken hands with big Lieutenant Lee, whose kind, brown eyes were full of fun and playfulness whenever he greeted her. But it was noticed that something, all of a sudden, had occurred to mar the growing intimacy; then that the once blithe little lady was looking white and sorrowful; that she avoided Miss Stanley for two whole days, and that her blue eyes watched wistfully for some one who did not come,—"Mr. Stanley, no doubt," was the diagnosis of the case by "Miss Mischief" and others.

Then, like thunderclap, came the order for Phil Stanley's arrest, and then there were other sad faces. Miriam Stanley's dark eyes were not only troubled, but down in their depths was a gleam of suppressed indignation that people knew not how to explain. Colonel Stanley, to whom every one had been drawn from the first, now appeared very stern and grave; the joy had vanished from his face. Mrs. McKay was flitting about the parlors tearfully thankful that "it wasn't her boy." Nannie had grown whiter still, and very "absent" and silent. Mr. Lee did not come at all.

Then there was startling news! An outbreak, long smoldering, had just occurred at the great reservation of the Spirit Wolf; the agent and several of his men had been massacred; their women carried away into a captivity whose horrors beggar all description, and two troops—hardly sixscore men—of Colonel Stanley's regiment were already in pursuit. Leaving his daughter to the care of an old friend at Craney's, and after brief interview with his boy at barracks, the old soldier who had come eastward with such glad anticipation turned promptly back to the field of duty. He had taken the first train and was already beyond the Missouri. Almost immediately after the Colonel's departure Mr. Lee had come to the hotel and was seen to have a brief but earnest talk with Miss Stanley on the north piazza—a talk from which she had gone direct to her room and did not reappear for hours, while he, who usually had a genial, kindly word for every one, had turned abruptly down the north steps as though to avoid the crowded halls and piazzas, and so returned to the barracks.

"HER BLUE EYES WATCHED WISTFULLY FOR SOME ONE WHO DID NOT COME."

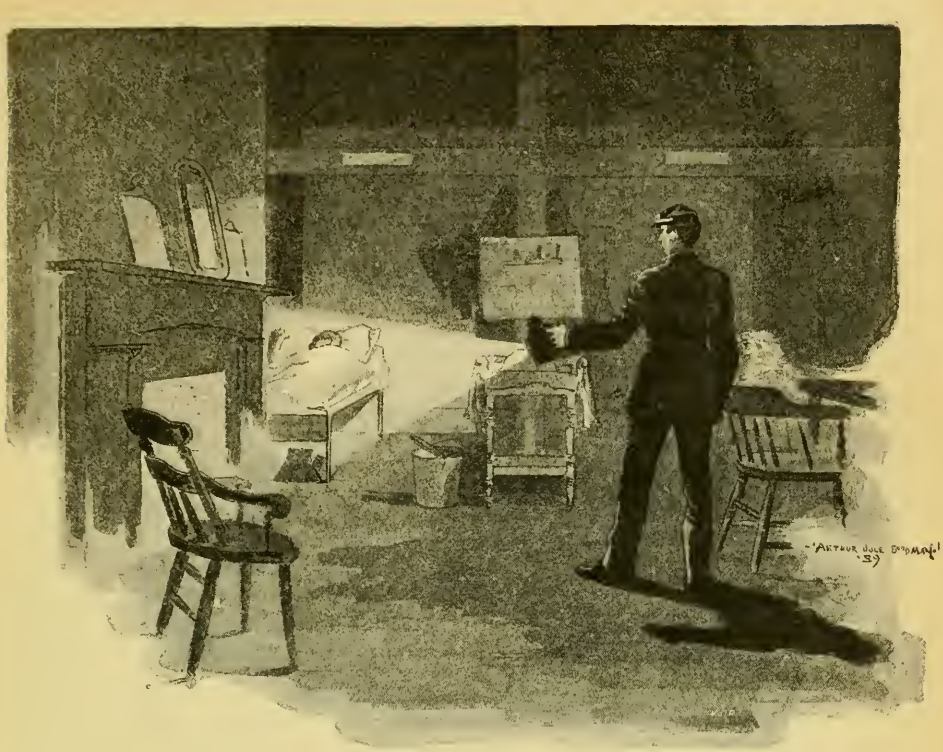
But now, this lovely June morning, the news from the far West is still more direful. Hundreds of savages have taken the warpath, and murder is the burden of every tale from around their reservation, but—this is the day of "last parade" and the graduating ball, and people cannot afford time to think of such grewsome matter. All the same, they note that Mr. Lee comes no more to the hotel, and a rumor is in circulation that he has begged to be relieved from duty at the Point and ordered to join his troop now in the field against hostile Indians.

Nannie McKay is looking like a pathetic shadow of her former self as she comes downstairs to fulfill an engagement with a cadet admirer. She neglects no duty of the kind toward Willy's friends and hers, but she is drooping and listless. Uncle Jack is worried about her —so, too, is Mamma, though the latter is so wrapped up in the graduation of her boy that she has little time to think of pallid cheeks and mournful eyes. It is all arranged that they are to sail for Europe the 1st of July; and the sea air, the voyage across, the new sights and associations on the other side, will "bring her round again," says that observant "avuncular" hopefully. He is compelled to be at his office in the city much of the time, but comes up this day as a matter of course, and has a brief chat with his graceless nephew at the guard-house. Billy's utter lack of spirits sets Uncle Jack to thinking. The boy says he can "tell him nothing just now," and Uncle Jack feels well assured that he has a good deal to tell. He goes in search of Lieutenant Lee, for whom he has conceived a great fancy, but the big lieutenant has gone to the city on business. In the crowded hall at the hotel he meets Miriam Stanley, and her face gives him another pound of trouble to carry.

"You are going to the ball, though?" he hears a lady say to her, and Miriam shakes her head.

Ball, indeed!—or last parade, either! She knows she cannot bear to see the class march to the front, and her brother not there. She cannot bear the thought of even looking on at the ball, if Philip is to be debarred from attending. Her thoughts have been very bitter for a few days past. Her father's intense but silent distress and regret; Philip's certain detention after the graduation of his class; his probable court martial and loss of rank; the knowledge that he had incurred it all to save McKay (and everybody by this time felt that it *must* be Billy McKay, though no one could prove it), all have conspired to make her very unhappy—and very unjust to Mr. Lee. Philip has told her that Mr. Lee had no alternative in reporting to the commandant his discovery "down the road," but she had believed herself of sufficient value in that officer's brown eyes to induce him to at least postpone any mention of that piece of accidental knowledge; and though, in her heart of hearts, she knows she respects him the more because she could not prevail against his sense of duty, she is stung to the quick, and, womanlike, has made him feel it.

It must be in sympathy with her sorrows that, late this afternoon, the heavens open and pour their floods upon the plain. Hundreds of people are bemoaning the fact that now there can be no graduating parade. Down in barracks the members of the class are busily packing trunks, trying on civilian garb, and rushing about in much excitement. In more senses than one Phil Stanley's room is a center of gravity. The commandant at ten o'clock had sent for him and given him final opportunity to state whose place he occupied during the inspection of that now memorable night, and he had respectfully but firmly declined. There was then no alternative but the withdrawal of his diploma, and his detention at the Point to await the action of the Secretary of War upon the charges preferred against him. "The Class," of course, knew by this time that McKay was the man whom he had saved, for after one day of torment and indecision that hapless youth had called in half a dozen of his comrades and made a clean breast of it. It was then his deliberate intention to go to the commandant and beg for Stanley's release, and to offer himself as the culprit. But Stanley had thought the problem out and gravely interposed. It could really do no practical good to him and would only result in disaster to McKay. No one could have anticipated the luckless chain of circumstances that had led to his own arrest, but now he must face the consequences. After long consultation the young counsellors had decided on the plan. "There is only one thing for us to do: keep the matter quiet. There is only one thing for Billy to do: keep a stiff upper lip; graduate with the class, then go to Washington with 'Uncle Jack,' and bestir their friends in Congress"—not just then assembled, but always available. There was never yet a time when a genuine "pull" from Senate and House did not triumph



"THE 'BULL'S-EYE' FLASHES ITS GLEAM, FIRST ON ONE BED, THEN ON THE OTHER."

over the principles of military discipline.

A miserable man is Billy! For a week he has moped in barracks, forbidden by Stanley and his advisers to admit anything—yet universally suspected of being the cause of all the trouble. He, too, wishes to cancel his engagements for the graduating ball, and thinks something ought to be done to those young idiots of yearlings who set off the torpedo. "Nothing could have gone wrong but for them," says he; but the wise heads of the class promptly snub him into silence. "You've simply got to do as we say in this matter, Billy. You've done enough mischief already." And so it results that the message he sends by Uncle Jack is: "Tell mother and Nan I'll meet them at the 'hop.' My confinements end at eight o'clock, but there's no use in my going to the hotel and tramping through the mud." The truth is, he cannot bear to meet Miriam Stanley, and 'twould be just his luck.

One year ago no happier, bonnier, brighter face could have been seen at the Point than that of Nannie McKay. Tonight, in all the throng of fair women and lovely girls, gathered with their soldier escorts in the great mess hall, there is none so sad. She tries hard to be chatty and smiling, but is too frank and honest a little soul to have much success. The dances that Phil Stanley had engaged months and months ago are accredited now to other names, and blissful young fellows in gray and gold come successively to claim them. But deep down in her heart she remembers the number of each. It was he who was to have been her escort. It was he who made out her card and gave it to her only a day or two before that fatal interview. It was he who was to have had the last waltz—the very last—that he would dance in the old cadet gray; and though new names have been substituted for his in other cases, this waltz she means to keep. Well knowing that there would be many to beg for it, she has written Willy's name for "Stanley," and duly warned him of the fact. Then, when it comes, she means to escape to

the dressing-room, for she is promptly told that her brother is engaged to Miss Waring for that very waltz. Light as are her feet, she never yet has danced with so heavy a heart. The rain still pours, driving everybody within doors. The heat is intense. The hall is crowded, and it frequently happens that partners cannot find her until near the end of their number on that dainty card. But every one has something to say about Phil Stanley and the universal regret at his absence. It is getting to be more than she can bear—this prolonged striving to respond with proper appreciation and sympathy, yet not say too much—not betray the secret that is now burning, throbbing in her girlish heart. He does not dream it, but there, hidden beneath the soft lace upon her snowy neck, lies that "knot of ribbon blue" which she so laughingly had given him, at his urging, the last day of her visit the previous year; the knot which he had so loyally treasured and then so sadly returned. A trifling, senseless thing to make such an ado about, but these hearts are young and ardent, and this romance of his has many a counterpart, the memory of which may bring to war-worn, grizzled heads to-day a blush almost of shame—and would surely bring to many an old and sometimes aching heart a sigh. Hoping against hope poor Nannie has thought it just possible that at the last moment the authorities would relent and he be allowed to attend. If so—if so, angry and justly angered though he might be, cut to the heart though he expressed himself, has she not here the means to call him back?—to bid him come and know how contrite she is? Hour after hour she glances at the broad archway at the east, yearning to see his dark, handsome face among the new comers—all in vain. Time and again she encounters Sallie Waring, brilliant, bewitching, in the most ravishing of toilets, and always with half a dozen men about her. Twice she notices Will among them with a face gloomy and rebellious, and, hardly knowing why, she almost hates her.

At last comes the waltz that was to have been Philip's—the waltz she has saved for his sake though he cannot claim it. Mr. Pennock, who has danced the previous galop with her, sees the leader raising his baton, bethinks him of his next partner, and leaves her at the open window close to the dressing-room door. There she can have a breath of fresh air, and, hiding behind the broad backs of several bulky officers and civilians, listen undisturbed to the music she longed to enjoy with him. Here, to her surprise, Will suddenly joins her.

"I thought you were engaged to Miss Waring for this," she says.

"I was," he answers savagely, "but I'm well out of it. I resigned in favor of a big 'cit' who's worth only twenty thousand a year, Nan, and she has been engaged to him all this time and never let me know until to-night."

"*Willy!*" she gasps. "Oh! I'm so glad—sorry, I mean! I never *did* like her."

"*I* did, Nan, more's the pity. I'm not the first she's made a fool of," and he turns away, hiding the chagrin in his young face. They are practically alone in this sheltered nook. Crowds are around them, but looking the other way. The rain is dripping from the trees without, and pattering on the stone flags. McKay leans out into the night, and the sister's loving heart yearns over him in his trouble.

"Willy," she says, laying the little white-gloved hand on his arm. "It's hard to bear, but she isn't worthy *any* man's love. Twice I've heard in the last two days that she makes a boast of it that 'twas to see her that some one risked his commission and so—kept Mr. Stanley from being here to-night. Willy, *do* you know who it was? *Don't* you think he ought to have come forward like a gentleman, days ago, and told the truth? *Will!* What is it? *Don't* look so! Speak to me, Willy—your little Nan. Was there ever a time, dear, when my whole heart wasn't open to you in love and sympathy?"

And now, just at this minute the music begins again. Soft, sweet, yet with such a strain of pathos and of sadness running through every chord, it is the loveliest of all the waltzes played in his "First Class Camp"—the one of all others he most loved to hear. Her heart almost bursts now to think of him in his lonely room, beyond hear-

ing of the melody that is so dear to him—that is now so passionately dear to her — "Love's Sigh." Doubtless, Philip had asked the leader days ago to play it here and at no other time. It is more than enough to start the tears long welling in her eyes. For an instant it turns her from thought of Willy's own heartache.

"Will!" she whispers, desperately. "This was to have been Philip Stanley's waltz—and I want you to take—something to him for me."

He turns back to her again, his hands clinched, his teeth set, still thinking only of his own bitter humiliation—of how that girl has fooled and jilted him—of how for her sake he had brought all this trouble on his stanchest friend.

"Phil Stanley!" he exclaims. "By Heaven! It makes me nearly mad to think of it—and all for her sake—all through me. O Nan! Nan! I *must* tell you! It was for me—to save me that—"

"*Willy!*" and there is almost horror in her wide blue eyes. "*Willy!*" she gasps—"oh *don't*—don't tell me *that!* Oh—it isn't *true?* Not you—not you, Willy. Not my brother—Oh quick! Tell me."

Startled, alarmed, he seizes her hand.

"Little sister! What—what has happened—what is—"

But there is no time for more words. The week of misery; the piteous strain of the long evening, the sweet, sad, wailing melody—his favorite waltz; the sudden, stunning revelation that it was for Willy's sake that he—her hero—was now to suffer, he whose heart she had trampled on and crushed! It is all more than mortal girl can bear. With the beautiful strains moaning, whirling, ringing, surging through her brain, she is borne dizzily away into darkness and oblivion.

* * * * *

There follows a week in which sadder faces yet are seen about the old hotel. The routine of the Academy goes on undisturbed. The graduating class has taken its farewell of the gray walls and gone upon its way. New faces, new voices are those in the line of officers at parade. The corps has pitched its white tents under the trees beyond the grassy parapet of Fort Clinton, and, with the graduates and furlough-men gone, its ranks look pitifully thinned. The throng of visitors has vanished. The halls and piazzas at Craney's are well-nigh deserted, but among the few who linger there is not one who has not loving inquiry for the young life that for a brief while has fluttered so near the grave. "Brain fever," said the doctors to Uncle Jack, and a new anxiety was lined in his kindly face as he and Will McKay sped on their mission to the Capitol. They had to go—though little Nan lay sore stricken at the Point.

But youth and elasticity triumph. The danger is passed. She lies now, very white and still, listening to the sweet strains of the band trooping down the line this soft June evening. Her mother, worn with watching, is resting on the lounge. It is Miriam Stanley who hovers at the bedside. Presently the trumpets peal the retreat; the sunset gun booms across the plain; the ringing voice of the young adjutant comes floating on the southerly breeze, and, as she listens, Nannie follows every detail of the well-known ceremony, wondering how it *could* go on day after day with no Mr. Pennock to read the orders; with no "big Burton" to thunder his commands to the first company; with no Philip Stanley to march the colors to their place on the line. "Where is *he?*" is the question in the sweet blue eyes that so wistfully seek his sister's face; but she answers not. One by one the first sergeants made their reports; and now—that ringing voice again, reading the orders of the day. How clear it sounds! How hushed and still the listening Point!

"Head-quarters of the Army," she hears. "Washington, June 15th, 187–. Special orders, Number —.

"*First.* Upon his own application, First Lieutenant George Romney Lee, —th Cavalry, is hereby relieved from duty at the U. S. Military Academy, and will join his troop now in the field against hostile Indians.

"*Second.* Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent U. S. Military Academy, the charges preferred against Cadet Captain Philip S. Stanley are withdrawn. Cadet Stanley will be considered as graduated with his class on the 12th instant, will be released from

"THEY HAD COME UPON THE BODIES OF A LITTLE PARTY OF SOLDIERS, STRIPPED, SCALPED, AND MUTILATED."

arrest and authorized to avail himself of the leave of absence granted his class."

Nannie starts from her pillow, clasping in her thin white fingers the soft hand that would have restrained her.

"Miriam!" she cries. "Then—will he go?"

The dark, proud face bends down to her: clasping arms encircle the little white form, and Miriam Stanley's very heart wails forth in answer:

"O Nannie! He is almost there by this time—both of them. They left to join the regiment three days ago; their orders came by telegraph."

Another week, and Uncle Jack is again with them. The doctors agree that the ocean voyage is now not only advisable but necessary. They are to move their little patient to the city and board their steamer in a day or two. Will has come to them, full of disgust that he has been assigned to the artillery, and filling his mother's heart with dismay because he is begging for a transfer to the cavalry, to the —th regiment—of all others—now plunged in the whirl of an Indian war. Every day the papers come freighted with rumors of fiercer fighting; but little that is reliable can be heard from "Sabre Stanley" and his column. They are far beyond telegraphic communication, hemmed in by "hostiles" on every side.

Uncle Jack is an early riser. Going down for his paper before breakfast, he is met at the foot of the stairs by a friend who points to the headlines of the *Herald*, with the simple remark, "Isn't this hard?"

It is brief enough, God knows.

"A courier just in from Colonel Stanley's camp brings the startling news that Lieutenant Philip Stanley, —th Cavalry, with two scouts and a small escort, who left here Sunday, hoping to push through to the Spirit Wolf, were ambushed by the Indians in Black Cañon. Their bodies, scalped and mutilated, were found Wednesday night."

Where, then, was Romney Lee?

VII.

THE red sun is going down behind the line of distant buttes, throwing long shadows out across the grassy upland. Every crest and billow of the prairie is bathed in crimson and gold, while

the "breaks" and ravines trending southward grow black and forbidding in their contrasted gloom. Far over to the southeast, in dazzling radiance, two lofty peaks, still snow-clad, gleam against the summer sky, and at their feet dark waves of forest-covered foot-hills drink in the last rays of the waning sunshine as though hoarding its treasured warmth against the chill of coming night. Already the evening air, rare and exhilarating at this great altitude, loses the sun-god's touch and strikes upon the cheek keen as the ether of the limitless heavens. A while ago, only in the distant valley winding to the south could foliage be seen. Now all in those depths is merged in somber shade, and not a leaf or tree breaks for miles the grand monotony. Close at hand a host of tiny mounds, each tipped with reddish gold, and some few further ornamented by miniature sentry, alert and keen-eyed, tell of a prairie township already laid out and thickly populated; and at this moment every sentry is chipping his pert, querulous challenge until the disturbers of the peace are close upon him,—then diving headlong into the bowels of the earth.

A dun cloud of dust rolls skyward along a well-worn cavalry trail, and is whirled into space by the hoofs of sixty panting chargers trotting steadily south. Sixty sunburned, dust-covered troopers ride grimly on, following the lead of a tall soldier whose kind brown eyes peer anxiously from under his scouting hat. It is just as they pass the village of the prairie dogs that he points to the low valley down to the front and questions the "plainsman" who lopes along by his side:

"That Black Cañon down yonder?"

"That's it, lieutenant: I didn't think you could make it to-night."

"We *had* to," is the simple reply as again the spur touches the jaded flank, and evokes only a groan in response.

"How far from here to—the Springs?" he presently asks again.

"Box Elder?—where they found the bodies?—'bout five mile, sir."

"Where away was that signal smoke we saw at the divide?"

"Must have been from those bluffs—east of the Springs, sir."

Lieutenant Lee whips out his watch and peers at the dial through the twilight. The cloud deepens on his haggard, handsome face. Eight o'clock, and they have been in saddle almost incessantly since yesterday afternoon, weighed down with the tidings of the fell disaster that has robbed them of their comrades, and straining every nerve to reach the scene.

Only five days before, as he stepped from the railway car at the supply station, a wagon train had come in from the front escorted by Mr. Lee's own troop; his captain with it, wounded. Just as soon as it could reload with rations and ammunition the train was to start on its eight days' journey to the Spirit Wolf, where Colonel Stanley and the —th were bivouacked and scouring the neighboring mountains. Already a battalion of infantry was at the station; another was on its way, and supplies were being hurried forward. Captain Gregg brought the first reliable news. The Indians had apparently withdrawn from the road. The wagon train had come through unmolested, and Colonel Stanley was expecting to push forward into their fastnesses farther south the moment he could obtain authority from headquarters. With these necessary orders two couriers had started just twelve hours before. The captain was rejoiced to see his favorite lieutenant and to welcome Philip Stanley to the regiment. "Everybody seemed to feel that you too would be coming right along," he said; "but, Phil, my boy, I'm afraid you're too late for the fun. You can not catch the command before it starts from Spirit Wolf."

And yet this was just what Phil had tried to do. Lee knew nothing of his plan until everything had been arranged between the young officer and the major commanding the temporary camp at the station. Then it was too late to protest. While it was Mr. Lee's duty to remain and escort the train, Philip Stanley, with two scouts and half a dozen troopers, had pushed out to overtake the regiment two hundred miles away. Forty-eight hours later, as the wagon train with its guard was slowly crawling southward, it was met by a courier with ghastly face. He was one of three who had started from the ruined agency together. They met no Indians, but at Box Elder Springs had come upon the bodies of a

little party of soldiers stripped, scalped, gashed, and mutilated—nine in all. There could be little doubt that they were those of poor Philip and his new-found comrades. The courier had recognized two of the bodies as those of Forbes and Whiting—the scouts who had gone with the party; the others he did not know at all.

Parking his train then and there, sending back to the railway for an infantry company to hasten forward and take charge of it, Mr. Lee never hesitated as to his own course. He and his troop pushed on at once. And now, worn, weary, but determined, the little command is just in sight of the deep ravine known to frontiersmen for years as Black Cañon. It was through here that Stanley and his battalion had marched a fortnight since. It was along this very trail that Phil and his party, pressing eagerly on to join the regiment, rode down into its dark depths and were ambushed at the springs. From all indications, said the courier, they must have unsaddled for a brief rest, probably just at nightfall; but the Indians had left little to aid them in forming an opinion. Utterly unnerved by the sight, his two associates had turned back to rejoin Stanley's column, while he, the third, had decided to make for the railway. Unless those men, too, had been cut off, the regiment by this time knew of the tragic fate of some of their comrades, but the Colonel was mercifully spared all dread that one of the victims was his only son.

Nine were in the party when they started. Nine bodies were lying there when the couriers reached the Springs, and now nine are lying here to-night when, just after moonrise, Romney Lee dismounts and bends sadly over them—one after another. The prairie wolves have been here first, adding mutilation to the butchery of their human prototypes. There is little chance, in this pallid light and with these poor remnants, to make identification a possibility. All vestiges of uniform, arms, and equipment have been carried away, and such underclothing as remains has been torn to shreds by the herd of snarling, snapping brutes which is driven off only by the rush of the foremost troopers, and is now dispersed all over the cañon and far up the heights beyond the outposts and sentries, yelping indignant protest.

There can be no doubt as to the number slain. All the nine are here, and Mr. Lee solemnly pencils the dispatch that is to go back to the railway so soon as a messenger and his horse can get a few hours' needed rest. Before daybreak the man is away, meeting on his lonely ride other comrades hurrying to the front, to whom he briefly gives confirmation of the first report. Before the setting of the second sun he has reached his journey's end, and the telegraph is flashing the mournful details to the distant East, and so, when the *Servia* slowly glides from her moorings and turns her prow toward the sparkling sea, Nannie McKay is sobbing her heart out alone in her little white stateroom, crushing with her kisses, bathing with her tears, the love knot she had given her soldier boy less than a year before.

Another night comes around. Tiny fires are glowing down in the dark depths of Black Cañon, showing red through the frosty gleam of the moonlight. Under the silvery rays nine new-made graves are ranked along the turf, guarded by troopers whose steeds are browsing close at hand. Silence and sadness reign in the little bivouac where Lee and his comrades await the coming of the train they had left three days before. It will be here on the morrow—early, and then they must push ahead and bear their heavy tidings to the regiment. He has written one sorrowing letter—and what a letter to have to write to the woman he loves!—to tell Miriam that he has been unable to identify any one of the bodies as that of her gallant young brother, yet is compelled to believe him to lie there—one of the stricken nine. And now he must face the father with this bitter news! Romney Lee's sore heart fails him at the prospect and he can not sleep. Good heaven! *Can* it be that three weeks only have passed away since the night of that lovely yet ill-fated carriage-ride down through Highland Falls, down beyond picturesque Hawkshurst?

Out on the bluffs, though he can not see them, and up and down the cañon, vigilant sentries guard this solemn bivouac. No sign of Indian has been seen except the hoofprints of a score of

ponies and the bloody relics of their direful visit. No repetition of the signal smokes has greeted their watchful eyes. It looks as though this outlying band of warriors had noted his coming, had sent up their warning to others of their tribe, and then scattered for the mountains at the south. All the same, as he rode the bluff lines at nightfall, Mr. Lee had charged the sentries to be alert with eye and ear, and to allow none to approach unchallenged.

The weary night wears on. The young moon has ridden down in the west and sunk behind that distant bluff line. All is silent as the graves around which his men are slumbering, and at last, worn with sorrow and vigil, Lee rolls himself in his blanket, and, still booted and spurred, stretches his feet toward the little watch-fire, and pillows his head upon the saddle. Down the stream the horses are already beginning to tug at their lariats and struggle to their feet, that they may crop the dew-moistened bunch grass. Far out upon the chill night air the yelping challenge of the coyotes is heard, but the sentries give no sign. Despite grief and care Nature asserts her sway and is fast lulling Lee to sleep, when, away up on the heights to the northwest, there leaps out a sudden lurid flash and, a second after, the loud ring of the cavalry carbine comes echoing down the cañon. Lee springs to his feet and seizes his rifle. The first shot is quickly followed by a second; the men are tumbling up from their blankets, and, with the instinct of old campaigners, thrusting cartridges into the opened chambers.

"Keep your men together here, sergeant," is the brief order, and in a moment more Lee is spurring upward along an old game trail. Just under the crest he overtakes a sergeant hurrying northward.

"What is it?—Who fired?" he asks.

"Morris fired, sir: I don't know why. He is the farthest post up the bluffs."

Together they reach a young trooper, crouching in the pallid dawn behind a jagged parapet of rock, and eagerly demand the cause of the alarm. The sentry is quivering with excitement.

"An Indian, sir! Not a hundred yards out there! I seen him plain enough to swear to it. He rose up from behind that point yonder, and started out over the prairie, and I up and fired."

"Did you challenge?"

"No, sir," answers the young soldier simply. "He was going away. He couldn't understand me if I had,—leastwise I couldn't 'a understood him. He ran like a deer the moment I fired, and was out of sight almost before I could send another shot."

Lee and the sergeant push out along the crest, their arms at "ready"; their keen eyes searching every dip in the surface. Close to the edge of the cañon, perhaps a hundred yards away, they come upon a little ledge, behind which, under the bluff, it is possible for an Indian to steal unnoticed toward their sentries and to peer into the depths below. Some one has been here within a few minutes, watching, stretched prone upon the turf, for Lee finds it dry and almost warm, while all around the bunch grass is heavy with dew. Little by little as the light grows warmer in the east and aids them in their search, they can almost trace the outline of a recumbent human form. Presently the west wind begins to blow with greater strength, and they note the mass of clouds, gray and frowning, that is banked against the sky. Out on the prairie not a moving object can be seen, though the eye can reach a good rifle-shot away. Down in the darkness of the cañon the watch-fires still smoulder and the men still wait. There comes no further order from the heights. Lee, with the sergeant, is now bending over faint footprints just discernible in the pallid light.

Suddenly up he starts and gazes eagerly out to the west. The sergeant, too, at the same instant, leaps toward his commander. Distant, but distinct, two quick shots have been fired far over among those tumbling buttes and ridges lying there against the horizon. Before either man could speak or question, there comes another, then another, then two or three in quick succession, the sound of firing thick and fast.

"It's a fight, sir, sure!" cries the sergeant eagerly.

"To horse, then—quick!" is the answer, as the two soldiers bound back to the trail.

"Saddle up, men!" rings the order,

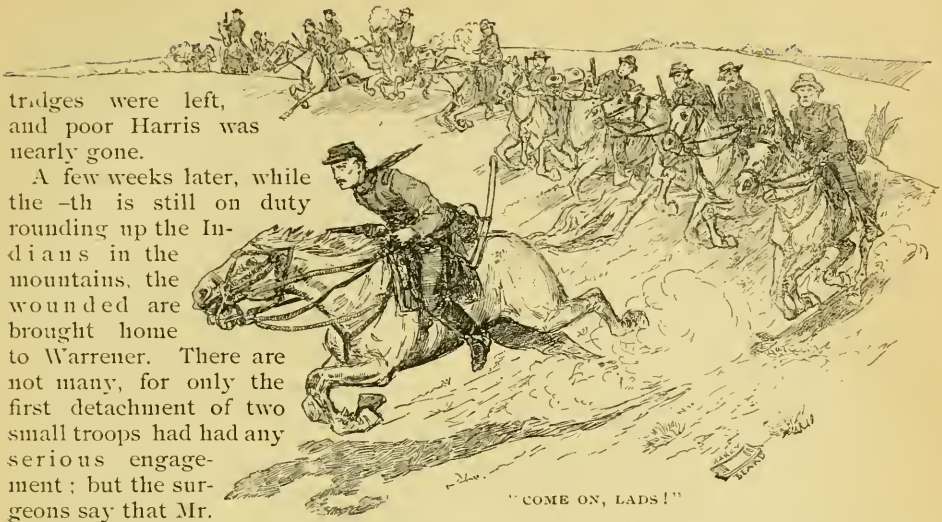
shouted down the rocky flanks of the ravine. There is instant response in the neigh of excited horses, the clatter of iron-shod hoofs. Through the dim light the men go rushing, saddles and bridles in hand, each to where he has driven his own picket pin. Promptly the steeds are girthed and bitted. Promptly the men come running back to the bivouac; seizing and slinging carbines, then leading into line. A brief word of command, another of caution, and then the whole troop is mounted, and, following its leader, rides ghostlike up a winding ravine that enters the cañon from the west, and goes spurring to the high plateau beyond. Once there the eager horses have ample room; the springing turf invites their speed. "Front into line" they sweep at rapid gallop, and then, with Lee well out before them, with carbines advanced, with hearts beating high, with keen eyes flashing, and every ear strained for sound of the fray,—away they bound. There's a fight ahead! Some one needs their aid, and there's not a man in all old "B" troop who does not mean to avenge those new-made graves. Up a little slope they ride, all eyes fixed on Lee. They see him reach the ridge, sweep gallantly over, then, with ringing cheer, turn in saddle, wave his revolver high in air, clap spur to his horse's flank and go darting down the other side.

"Come *on*, lads!"

Ay, on it is! One wild race for the crest, one headlong charge down the slope beyond, and they are rolling over a band of yelling, scurrying, savage horsemen, whirling them away over the opposite ridge, driving them helter-skelter over the westward prairie, until all who escape the shock of the onset or the swift bullet in the raging chase, finally vanish from their sight; and then, obedient to the ringing "recall" of the trumpet, slowly they return, gathering again in the little ravine; and there, wondering, rejoicing, jubilant, they cluster at the entrance of a deep cleft in the rocks, where, bleeding from a bullet wound in the arm, but with a world of thankfulness and joy in his handsome face, their leader stands, clasping Philip Stanley, pallid, faint, well-nigh starving, but—God be praised!—safe and unscathed.

VIII.

How the tidings of that timely rescue thrills through every heart at old Fort Warrener! There are gathered the wives and children of the regiment. There is the colonel's home, silent and darkened for that one long week, then ringing with joy and congratulation, with gladness and thanksgiving. Miriam again is there, suddenly lifted from the depths of sorrow to a wealth of bliss she had no words to express. Day and night the little army coterie flocked about her to hear again and again the story of Philip's peril and his final rescue,—and then to exclaim over Romney Lee's gallantry and devotion. It was all so bewildering. For a week they had mourned their colonel's only son as dead and buried. The wondrous tale of his discovery sounded simply fabulous, and yet was simply true. Hurrying forward from the railway, the little party had been joined by two young frontiersmen eager to obtain employment with the scouts of Stanley's column. Halting just at sunset for brief rest at Box Elder Springs, the lieutenant with Sergeant Harris had climbed the bluffs to search for Indian signal fires. It was nearly dark when on their return they were amazed to hear the sound of fire-arms in the cañon, and were themselves suddenly attacked and completely cut off from their comrades. Stanley's horse was shot; but Sergeant Harris, though himself wounded, helped his young officer to mount behind him, and galloped back into the darkness, where they evaded their pursuers by turning loose their horse and groping in among the rocks. Here they hid all night and all next day in the deep cleft where Lee had found them, listening to the shouts and signals of a swarm of savage foes. At last the sounds seemed to die away, the Indians to disappear, and then hunger, thirst, and the feverish delirium of the sergeant, who was tortured for want of water, drove Stanley forth in hopes of reaching the cañon. Fired at, as he supposed, by Indians, he was speedily back in his lair again, but was there almost as speedily tracked and besieged. For a while he was able to keep the foe at bay, but Lee had come just in the nick of time; only two car-



"COME ON, LADS!"

tridges were left, and poor Harris was nearly gone.

A few weeks later, while the -th is still on duty rounding up the Indians in the mountains, the wounded are brought home to Warrener. There are not many, for only the first detachment of two small troops had had any serious engagement; but the surgeons say that Mr. Lee's arm is so badly crippled that he can do no field work for several months, and he had best go in to the railway. And now he is at Warrener; and here, one lovely moonlit summer's evening, he is leaning on the gate in front of the colonel's quarters, utterly regardless of certain injunctions as to avoiding exposure to the night air. Good Mrs. Wilton, the major's wife—who, army fashion, is helping Miriam keep house in her father's absence—has gone in before "to light up," she says, though it is too late for callers; and they have been spending a long evening at Captain Gregg's, "down the row." It is Miriam who keeps the tall lieutenant at the gate. She has said good-night,—yet lingers. He has been there several days, his arm still in its sling, and not once has she had a word with him alone—till now. Some one has told her that he has asked for leave of absence to go East and settle some business affairs he had to leave abruptly when hurrying to take part in the campaign. If this be true—is it not time to be making her peace?

The moonlight throws a brilliant sheen on all surrounding objects, yet she stands in the shade, bowered in a little archway of vines that overhangs the gate. He has been strangely silent during the brief walk homeward, and now, so far from following into the shadows as she half hoped he might do, he stands without, the flood of moonlight falling full upon his stalwart figure. Two months ago he would not thus have held aloof, yet now he is half extending his hand as though in adieu. She can not fathom this strange silence on the part of him who so long has been devoted as a lover. She knows well it can not be because of her injustice to him at the Point that he is unrelenting now. Her eyes have told him how earnestly she repents; and does he not always read her eyes? Only in faltering words, in the presence of others all too interested, has she been able to speak her thanks for Philip's rescue. She can not see now that what he fears from her change of mood is, that gratitude for her brother's safety, not a woman's response to the passionate love in his deep heart, is the impulse of this sweet, half-shy, half-entreating manner. He can not sue for love from a girl weighted with a sense of obligation. He knows that lingering here is dangerous, —yet he can not go. When friends are silent 'tis time for chats to close; but there is a silence that at such a time as this only bids a man to speak, and speak boldly. Yet Lee is dumb.

Once—over a year ago—he had come to the colonel's quarters to seek permission to visit the neighboring town on some sudden errand. She had met him at the door with the tidings that her father had been feeling far from well during the morning, and was now taking a nap.

"Won't I do for commanding officer this time?" she had laughingly inquired.

"I would ask no better fate—for all time," was his prompt reply, and he spoke too soon. Though neither ever forgot the circumstance, she would never again permit allusion to it. But to-night it is uppermost in her mind. She *must* know if it be true that he is going.

"Tell me," she suddenly asks, "have you applied for leave of absence?"

"Yes," he answers simply.

"And you are going—soon?"

"I am going to-morrow," is the utterly unlooked-for reply.

"To-morrow! Why!—Mr. Lee."

There can be no mistaking the shock it gives her, and still he stands and makes no sign. It is cruel of him! What has she said or done to deserve penance like this? He is still holding out his hand as though in adieu, and she lays hers, fluttering, in the broad palm.

"I—I thought all applications had to be made to—your commanding officer," she says at last, falteringly, yet archly.

"Major Wilton forwarded mine on Monday. I asked him to say nothing about it. The answer came by wire to-day."

"Major Wilton is *post* commander; but —did you not—a year ago——?"

"Did I not?" he speaks in eager joy. "Do you mean you have not forgotten *that?* Do you mean that now—for all time—my first allegiance shall be to you, Miriam?"

No answer for a minute; but her hand is still firmly clasped in his. At last—

"Don't you think you ought to have asked me, before applying for leave to go?"

Mr. Lee is suddenly swallowed up in the gloom of that shaded bower under the trellis-work, though a radiance as of midday is shining through his heart.

But soon he has to go. Mrs. Wilton is on the veranda, urging them to come in out of the chill night air. Those papers on his desk must be completed and filed this very night. He has told her this.

"To-morrow, early, I will be here," he murmurs. "And now, good-night, my own."

But she does not seek to draw her hand away. Slowly he moves back into the bright moonbeams and she follows part way. One quick glance she gives as her hand is released and he raises his forage cap. It is *such* a disadvantage to have but one arm at such a time! She sees that Mrs. Wilton is at the other end of the veranda.

"Good-night," she whispers. "I—know you *must* go."

"I must. There is so much to be done."

"I—thought"—another quick glance at the piazza—"that a soldier, on leaving, should — salute his commanding officer?"

And Romney Lee is again in shadow and—in sunshine.

* * * * *

Late that autumn, in one of his infrequent letters to his devoted mother, Mr. McKay finds time to allude to the news of Lieutenant Lee's approaching marriage to Miss Stanley.

"Phil is, of course, immensely pleased," he writes; "and from all I hear I suppose Mr. Lee is a very different fellow from what we thought six months ago. Pennock says I always had a wrong idea of him; but Pennock thinks all my ideas about the officers appointed over me are absurd. He likes old Pelican, our battery commander, who is just the crankiest, crabbedest, soreheadedest captain in all the Artillery, and that is saying a good deal. I wish I'd got into the Cavalry at the start; but there's no use in trying now. The -th is the only regiment I wanted; but they have to go to reveille and stables before breakfast, which wouldn't suit me at all.

"Hope Nan's better. A winter in the Riviera will set her up again. Stanley asks after her when he writes, but he has rather dropped me of late. I suppose it's because I was too busy to answer, though he ought to know that in New York harbor a fellow has no time for scribbling, whereas, out on the plains, they have nothing else to do. He sent me his picture a while ago, and I tell you he has improved wonderfully. Such a swell mustache! I meant to have sent it over for you and Nan to see, but I've mislaid it somewhere."

Poor little Nan! She would give many of her treasures for one peep at the coveted picture that Will holds so lightly.

There had been temporary improvement in her health at the time Uncle Jack came with the joyous tidings that Stanley was safe after all; but even the Riviera fails to restore her wonted spirits. She droops visibly during the long winter. "She grows so much older away from Willy," says the fond mamma, to whom proximity to that vivacious youth is the acme of earthly bliss. Uncle Jack grins and says nothing. It is dawning upon him that something is needed besides the air and sunshine of the Riviera to bring back the dancing light in those sweet blue eyes and joy to the wistful little face.

"The time to see the Yosemite and 'the glorious climate of California' is April, not October," he suddenly declares one balmy morning by the Mediterranean; "and the sooner we get back to Yankeedom the better 'twill suit me."

And so it happens that, early in the month of meteorological smiles and tears, the trio are speeding westward far across the rolling prairies: Mrs. McKay deeply scandalized at the heartless conduct of the War Department in refusing Willy a two-months' leave to go with them; Uncle Jack quizzically disposed to look upon that calamity as a not utterly irretrievable ill; and Nan, fluttering with hope, fear, joy, and dread,—all intermingled; for is not *he* stationed at Cheyenne? All these long months has she cherished that little knot of senseless ribbon. If she had sent it to him within the week of his graduation, perhaps it would not have seemed amiss; but after that, after all he had been through in the campaign—the long months of silence—he might have changed, and, for very shame, she can not bring herself to give a signal he would perhaps no longer wish to obey. Every hour her excitement and nervousness increase; but when the conductor of the Pullman comes to say that Cheyenne is really in sight, and the long whistle tells that they are nearing the dinner station of those days, Nan simply loses herself entirely. There will be half an hour, and Philip actually there to see, to hear, to answer. She hardly knows whether she is of this mortal earth when Uncle Jack comes bustling in with the gray-haired colonel, when she feels Miriam's kiss upon her cheek, when Mr. Lee, handsomer and kindlier than ever, bends down to take her hand; but she looks beyond them all for the face she longs for,—and it is not there. The car seems whirling around when, from over her shoulder, she hears, in the old, well-remembered tones, a voice that redoubles the throb of her little heart.

"Miss Nannie!"

And there—bending over her, his face aglow, and looking marvelously well in his cavalry uniform—is Philip Stanley. She knows not what she says. She has prepared something proper and conventional, but it has all fled. She looks one instant up into his shining eyes, and there is no need to speak at all. Every one else is so busy that no one sees, no one knows, that he is firmly clinging to her hand, and that she shamelessly and passively submits.

A little later—just as the train is about to start—they are standing at the rear door of the sleeper. The band of the —th is playing some distance up the platform,—a thoughtful device of Mr. Lee's to draw the crowd that way,—and they are actually alone. An exquisite happiness is in her eyes as she peers up into the love-light in his strong, steadfast face. *Something* must have been said; for he draws her close to his side and bends over her as though all the world were wrapped up in this dainty little morsel of womanhood. Suddenly the great train begins slowly to move. Part they must now, though it be only for a time. He folds her quickly, unresisting, to his breast. The sweet blue eyes begin to fill.

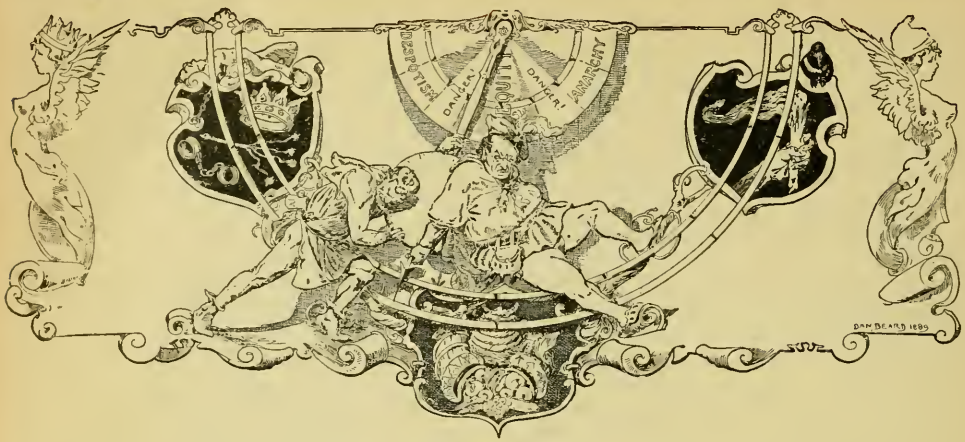
"My darling—my little Nannie," he whispers as his lips kiss away the gathering tears. "There is just an instant. What is it you tell me you have kept for me?"

"This," she answers, shyly placing in his hand a little packet wrapped in tissue paper. "Don't look at it yet! Wait!—But—I wanted to send it—the very next day, Philip."

Slowly he turns her blushing face until he can look into her eyes. The glory in his proud, joyous gaze is a delight to see. "My own little girl," he whispers, as his lips meet hers. "I know it is my love-knot."

THE END.

Social Problems, by Edward Everett Hale.



THE INDIAN POLICY of the United States has been a grievous difficulty to every administration. I do not think that our dear friend, Helen Hunt, is quite right when she speaks of our dealings with the Indians as a "Century of Dishonor." Certainly, Washington and the Adamses, Madison, Jackson, Lincoln, Hayes, and most of the rest of the Presidents, were not dishonorable men. Nor were they men who would have permitted dishonor in their administrations. The truth is rather, that the problem has been a most difficult one,—that such a republic as ours has very poor chance to maintain continuity or unity in its traditions,—and that circumstances have been changing all the time. What has come to pass, then, is this: that there have been half a dozen "Indian policies,"—not to say a dozen,—each of which was adopted with high hopes and with good intention. But—with a change of dynasty, a change of theory, and a change in the surroundings, with no one left in office to stand for the old "policy," or even to remember what it was, with no embodied public sentiment to direct or suggest one policy or another—there has been a series of changes almost as disastrous as the choice of a policy intentionally cruel would have been.

Now, if a man lived a hundred and ten years,—as the nation has lived,—if he changed his plans and purposes six or eight times in that time, and if the sixth plan ran quite counter to the second, you might and would say that he was a dishonorable man. But when a nation, under the lead of a set of new men, who really do not know what their grandfathers promised, tries squarely to "do the fair thing" in as difficult a matter as this, I do not think it quite right to say it is *dishonored* if it do not carry forward the grandfathers' plans, if it cannot find any method of fulfilling their promises, if, in short, fulfillment is impossible. If you find that the nation is all along spending money liberally and even recklessly for these wards, you may say that its administration is foolish or even wicked. But I do not think it is quite exact to say that it is "dishonorable," unless it means to be.

Now, no one will maintain the theory that tribes of hunters own in fee-simple the lands on which they hunt. No one would pretend that the three hundred thousand Indians who were in the United States in 1607, owned all the land on which they did or did not rove. I may go a step further. Suppose a man does own a million acres, as the Binghams owned a million acres in Maine, or as Canonchet, or somebody like him, owned thousands of acres where Newport stands. This land is as worthless as so much water is, unless some one lives upon it. The United States, owning many thousands of acres of such land, have found it wise to give it away. Better to have the population and no land than to have the land with no population. So Canonchet, if it were he, was glad enough to give Aquidneck or Newport to some one who would settle there, and to receive two or three coats and a few hoes in re-

LONG-DISTANCE RIDING.

By Captain Charles King, U. S. A.

THE long distance race between officers of the German and Austrian armies, last year, aroused no little criticism, on both sides of the Atlantic, because of the number of horses reported injured or ruined and the methods alleged to have been used to get all there was out of the animal before he dropped by the roadside, and now another ripple that may swell into a wave of popular protest is already going forth and hampering, if, indeed, it should not overwhelm, the proposed cowboy run from Chadron to Chicago—more than double the Berlin-Vienna course of the foreign horsemen of 1892.

Time was in America when nothing less than four-mile heats would satisfy the lovers of thoroughbred horseflesh, and the veterans still prate of the days of Lexington and Lecompte and the glories of the old Metairie. It was the privilege, yet hardly the pleasure, of the writer to witness the last great four-mile heats ridden over the Metairie in New Orleans; after seeing the breakdown of Conductor and the pitiable condition of such beautiful racers as Anna B. and Madame Dudley after their fight to a finish of sixteen measured miles, he was thankful, indeed, that it was the last. Racing of that character seems but a peg or two above cock or dog-fighting. Contests for supremacy that result in collapse are, or should be, things of the past, and it is one of the glories of the American cavalry that, however often it may have been called upon to make long-distance rides—frequently, indeed, to the rescue of beleaguered and imperilled humanity—the trooper and his mount have generally come in at the home stretch fit for business and full of fight.

It is the purpose of this article, not so

much to harp upon the cruelty or uselessness of the other system, as to illustrate, however faintly, the better points of our own. It may, at some far distant period, have been necessary for a courier to ride four hundred miles at top-speed on a single horse, but it is not likely to occur again. How many miles a light, athletic rider could cover in a day, changing mounts every five or ten miles, was a problem our pony express solved in the days before the Union Pacific was built. How fast a single courier could bear dispatches to distant commands, through storm and darkness, over river and mountain, changing horses only when by luck or accident he came upon fresh mounts, had many a famous illustration during the war of the Rebellion and our Indian campaigns of the western frontier. But the problem which is most worthy the thoughtful consideration of the cavalry leader is that in which, given a certain force of mounted troops at a certain station, he must decide how best to march it so that it may most speedily reach a threatened point and bring every possible man and horse into action.

GERMAN HUSSAR, LONG-DISTANCE RIDING.

Illustrations of long-distance racing are few in our annals. Illustrations of rapid and scientific marches are many. These were long-distance cavalry rides in the best sense of the term—dashes to the rescue of comrades surrounded by Indians, of detachments besieged, sometimes of captured women; sometimes a rapid rush to head off and overthrow a hostile force. In each and every one of these cases the problem was not only to make the most of every minute, to get to the scene of action in the shortest possible time, but to bring thither the bulk of the command fit for anything it might find at the finish. Compared with a problem of this character, the question of how to train or shoe or ride a single horse so that he may carry his rider over a given distance in the shortest time, sinks into insignificance.

Many are the records of cavalry dashes on sudden orders, mostly, however, for distances easily compassed within a single day; but there are two marches that for cool calculation, brilliant and scientific handling, have no superiors in our annals, and both of these were made by the same soldier, with practically the same command. In July, 1876, General Wesley Merritt, U.S.A., then colonel, commanding the Fifth cavalry, led a march that outwitted and amazed the finest fighters of the plains and drove the hostile Cheyennes in full force back to their agency, when in the midst of their career to join the array of Sitting Bull. In October, 1879, General Merritt led a battalion of the same regiment on a still more famous march—that to the relief of Captain Payne's command, surrounded and besieged by hostile Indians in the wilds of Colorado.

To follow the first march on the maps of the day would be a difficult matter, because the nomenclature of the maze of little streams flowing into the South Cheyenne, south and southwest of the Black Hills of Dakota, is utterly changed: Horse Head and Indian creek, for instance, seem to have exchanged places; and the five or six tributaries which go to make up the rather sizable stream known now as Hat creek, bore as many titles during the Sioux war of 1876 as we had scouts—the array of Sage, Box Elder, Cottonwood, Willow, Beaver and Dry creeks was confusing to the last degree. The Indian name for one of these streams, however, was the Sioux equivalent for "War Bonnet," and it was surmised, at the time, that the frontiersmen had shortened that into "Hat," as equally suggestive and less bothersome. But the War Bonnet as given on the maps of today is not the War Bonnet of the fight of July, 1876, but lies at least thirty or forty miles south of the scene.

In that eventful summer, the great agency of the Ogallalas, Red Cloud's band of Sioux, was near Fort Robinson, on the White river, while Spotted Tail—head of the Brulés—was among the hills to the east, some thirty miles away. Sitting Bull, with six thousand warriors at

his back, was up in the grand range of country lying just north of the Big Horn mountains, where the commands of Crook, Terry and Gibbon were concentrating around him when the Fifth cavalry were sent up from Kansas to help out. Passing around the high bluffs north of White river, near Fort Robinson, a broad trail led from the Indian reservation northwestward across the intervening streams, traversed the valley of the Cheyenne a little east of the forks then known as the Mini Pusa (Dry Fork) and South Branch, and thence northwestward, past Pumpkin Buttes, to the Powder and Tongue river valleys. Over this trail, day after day, swarms of Indians were slipping away to join Sitting Bull, and the first orders of the Fifth cavalry were to march, by way of Fort Laramie, Rawhide Butte and Old Woman's Fork, to the valley of the South Cheyenne, keeping well to the west of this trail until we got to the timbered bottom of the main stream, and there to lurk in readiness to beat back any war parties and break up the traffic.

The advance guard reached the valley and found the trail early on Sunday morning, the 25th of June—just as Custer, with his fated column, was riding in to the attack on Sitting Bull's villages on the Greasy Grass (Little Horn), far to the northwest. Two or three lively chases sufficed to assure the Indians at the reservation that another route would be preferable, and they quit coming our way. Then the regiment was recalled, and, halting at an infantry-guarded palisade on the Black Hills road, about seventy miles from Fort Laramie and near the spring at the head of what was then called Sage creek, we heard, on the morning of July 7th, the direful news of the Custer massacre. On Wednesday, July 12th, under orders from General Sheridan, the Fifth cavalry started for Fort Laramie to refit, and then, by way of Fetterman and old Fort Reno, to go to reinforce General Crook. Camping at Cardinal's Chair that night, and under the lee of Rawhide Butte the next, we mounted on the morning of the 14th, expecting to go in to Laramie in one long march, and were surprised when headed eastward instead and led on down the Rawhide, which soon bore away to the southeast. Towards noon, General Merritt ordered halt and unsaddle at the crossing of the road from Laramie to the Indian reservation, and that "something

A HALF HOUR'S HALT.

was up" every man divined when "C" troop was sent away with orders to march to the Niobrara crossing, twenty-five miles away to the northward, and just so many nearer the agency where Major Jordan, commanding the infantry guard, had observed signs of mischief among the big villages of the southern Cheyennes. It was no quarrel of theirs; but the fearful success of Sitting Bull had so inflamed their savage nature that it proved impossible to hold them longer in check.

Promptly, Jordan got word cross country to Merritt, and the latter, seeing at once the gravity of the situation, instead of quitting the field, as his original orders required, "closed in," as his soldier conscience dictated. On Saturday, July 15th, just at noon, and in a whirl of dust, came a courier from the agency, sixty miles to the northeast. "Eight hundred hostile Cheyennes, fully equipped for the war-path, start at once to join Sitting Bull," was the word, and here was the situation in a nutshell. Riding away northwestward, these savage horsemen, probably the best in the world, would have a start of sixty miles, if Merritt pushed on to the agency and thence attempted pursuit. He did nothing of the kind. Their scouts and spies had seen him safely out of the Cheyenne valley and over the Niobrara, and reported him off for Laramie and out of the way. Therefore they could feel measurably secure. That the white chief could double on his tracks and throw himself across their path before they could reach the timber fringe of the Cheyenne, never occurred to them for a minute—yet that was just exactly what Merritt planned and did, and he had just seven troops, of about fifty men each, to back him. Always calm and methodical, he started on this soldierly mission with the same precision he would have displayed on a practice march. To meet and drive back these scientific fighters he must not only ride clear around them,—compass the entire arc, while they were traversing but a portion of chord,—must not only do it undiscovered, but must so do it as to bring every horse and man to the battle front, for, at his very best, they would outnumber him two to one.

A HALT FOR LUNCH.

It was just noon when the news came. Leaving a small guard with the wagons and ordering the quartermaster to follow, Merritt struck camp, sounded "boots and saddles," and by 1 P.M. we were marching back, along the Rawhide, in easy column of twos and at quiet walk, not more than three and three-quarters to four miles an hour. Fourteen miles up-stream and again under the lee of the sturdy old landmark, Rawhide Peak, we halted half an hour, watered in the clear brook, let the horses "pick a bit" at the Buffalo grass, then mounted again and followed our leaders, northwestward now, around the peak. By 5 P.M. we were heading square to the north, occasionally quickening the pace a trifle, but never so as to worry the rear of the column, always the sensitive part of a cavalry command. Darkness and we came down together on the broad valley of the Niobrara at just 10 o'clock. "Halt and unsaddle!" was the word, under the high buttes north of the Running Water (Niobrara), only thirty-five miles by the way we came; but horses had to eat to live, and we had nothing but grass to offer them, and not too much of that.

At midnight the wagons caught up. Three hours later, under the twinkling stars, every man was astir, the horses getting a good feed of oats from the wagons, the bipeds a hearty breakfast of bacon and coffee. Then "mount and away," still northward, still far to the west of the reservation, and, with the dawn, Merritt, on his big, swift gray, was making the pace for the column as we wound up the steep ascent to the divide between the Niobrara and Cheyenne basins. At this stage of the game we were fifty and the Cheyennes some twenty-five miles from the point where the Black Hills road,

A NIBBLE ON THE MARCH.

veering around now to the northeast, crossed almost at right angles the Indian trail from the reservation and the camps of Sitting Bull. Up, to the eastward, over the broad lands of the Sioux, rose the sun, as the long column came winding over the tumbling range, and on we pressed, hour after hour, until at 11 o'clock we halted, unsaddled and picketed around the palisade guard of the spring. Here men and horses had substantial lunch, and then came the longest stretch of all. Following close by the Black Hills road, east-north-east, over a rolling, treeless prairie, Merritt led the column, four and a half miles an hour now, at the very least, with only brief and occasional halts. A more rapid pace could hardly be ventured, because of the great dust clouds sure to hover over the column.

At sunset, far ahead, with the tumbling masses of the Southern Hills bearing almost eastward now, we sighted the winding fringe of green that told of cottonwoods along a stream, and the scouts, well out on our eastward flank, reported the Indian trail in view, with not an Indian on it. At 8 P.M., silent, dust-covered, but with every horse and man "on deck," Merritt ordered the unsaddling of his seven troops among the bends of the swirling stream, square across the Indian front—with the Cheyennes not ten miles away. Eighty-five miles had we come in thirty-one hours, without break or mishap, and every man feeling as full of vim as they who sang—

> With squadrons square, we'll all be there,
> To meet the foe in the morning.

Daybreak and the Cheyennes appeared together, and then came their turn for the "back track"—the most astonished lot of painted warriors it was ever my lot to see. It was in the first clash of outposts that their young chief, Yellow Hand, bit the dust, a victim to the superior prowess of our unequalled chief of scouts, Buffalo Bill—but that's an old story. So, too, for that matter, is that of the march; but it is one both Indian and trooper had reason to remember, and it was in the consequent race to the reservation only that the Cheyennes came out ahead.

Merritt's march to the relief of Payne's command should have a chapter of its own, and a worthier chronicler. Three troops of cavalry sent to the relief of an Indian agent were "corralled" on the Milk river, near Yellow Jacket pass of the Danforth range, in the northern part of what is now Garfield county, Colorado. Major Thornburg and several men were killed, dozens more were seriously and painfully wounded; almost all the horses were shot; escape was impossible. A daring courier had managed to slip out before the Indians fully encircled them, and after a desperate ride to Rawlins, on the Union Pacific road, one hundred and sixty miles away, wired the news. Captain Dodge, of the Ninth cavalry, scouting through the Park country, got wind of the disaster, made a famous and plucky ride with his "buffalo soldiers" and got safely in to share the fortunes and strengthen the hearts of the besieged, speedily having all his horses shot. These poor brutes could not burrow, as did their masters, making trenches in the sand and breastworks of the bacon. The sufferings of the four troops were severe, but nothing compared with the fate in store for them should relief fail.

On the morning of October 1st, a telegram reached General Merritt at Fort D. A. Russell, three miles out from Cheyenne. It was from department headquarters, briefly telling of the situation and ordering him to go at once, with every available man. He had only four troops left—"A," "B," "I" and "M," of the Fifth cavalry. At 1 o'clock away they marched, leaving scores of weeping wives and children, many of them in sore distress over the news already received. A special train was sent by the railway company to

transport the force from Cheyenne to Rawlins, where they arrived early on the morning of October 2d, detraining in the darkness. Then came the busy work of unloading supplies, forage and ammunition. A few brief hours of preparation and such sleep as the men could snatch, and at 11 A.M., on the 2d, Merritt's force was ready. With the same calm deliberation as before, he began his march over the rough and desolate country south of Rawlins, halting for brief rest of five or ten minutes at a time in cool cavalry style, but never unsaddling until within half an hour of midnight, when, with forty miles to their credit, the four troops bivouacked on Cow creek, close to the Colorado line. At eight the next morning, after feeding, watering and such grooming as could be done in the field, after substantial breakfast for one and all, the column marched again deliberately southward, through wild beauties of scenery they could not stop to admire. All day, from noon to near midnight, with but brief respite, on they steadily went, reaching camp on Fortification creek, in northern Colorado, having made fifty miles over mountain trails from their morning start.

Then came October 4th—the same deliberate preparation and start, no hurry, worry or fretting of horse or man, and this for good and sufficient cause. Seventy miles away lay their imperilled comrades, and Merritt meant to reach them before the rising of another sun. All day long, all the sharp October night, halting only for a few minutes rest—for the merest bite and sup,—the four dusty troops jogged on over a winding, rugged, rocky trail; Merritt often, as was his way, dismounting to lead, always "towing" his horse up or down a steep acclivity, every man, of course, following his lead; and at last, just before dawn, they reached the dim, shadowy valley in which, said their guide, their beleaguered comrades were by this time either dead or eagerly watching and waiting. Ever since the Sioux campaign of 1876, when, over a trackless prairie and in pitchy darkness, Payne's troop had been guided to the camp of its mates by the sounding of "officers' call," that signal had become a Fifth cavalry tradition. Knowing his colonel well—knowing that he would spare no effort to come to his aid—and believing it just barely possible that by the dawn of October 5th he would be within hailing distance, Payne and his comrades, fevered with wounds, thirst and the strain and suspense and peril of their week of siege, lay in their improvised trenches, eagerly, prayerfully waiting, like the besieged force at Lucknow.

> O, they listened, dumb and breathless,
> And they caught the sound at last,
> Faint and far beyond the Goomtee
> Rose and fell the piper's blast.

Then, indeed, was there wild burst of thanksgiving, in echo to the trumpet notes, soft and low, faint and far, yet telling infallibly of the march of Merritt and "the coming of the clans."

One hundred and sixty miles had the column covered since leaving the railway at noon on October 2d, and every man was ready for action when they reached the scene. Two horses had gone down with blind staggers on the march; one died from exhaustion before, and one after, reaching Milk river, and these were the only casualties resulting from that long-distance ride.

Another famous ride, on a somewhat smaller scale, but one of the traditions of the old army, was that made by Lieutenant Samuel D. Sturgis, of the First dragoons, when, in January, 1855, a party of Mescalero Apache Indians raided within twenty miles of Santa Fé, killing several settlers and running off some sixty head of mules. Sturgis, with only fifteen men, was sent in pursuit when the Indians had about eighteen hours' start. He and his party followed for sixty hours, overtaking the Indians at a distance of one hundred and seventy-five miles from Santa Fé, and in the fight that ensued killed three of the Indians, wounded several, recovered all the mules, except one or two that the Indians had eaten. They utilized every moment of light, and only halted when the pitchy darkness compelled them to rest until there was sufficient light to follow the trail. It won for Sturgis the thanks of the legislature of New Mexico.

As for individual rides, or long dashes with despatches or orders, incidents are almost too numerous to mention. One of the best on record was the exploit of Captain Charles F. Roe, now commander of Troop "A," National Guard of the State

of New York, but at the time a lieutenant of the First United States cavalry, stationed at Camp Harney, Oregon. It was along in the summer of 1869. An outbreak among the Indians near Fort Bidwell, California, was imminent, and the general commanding the department desired to send an officer whom the Indians knew and trusted, to counsel peace and patience. This was the commanding officer of Camp Warner, Oregon, an isolated station far over among the lava beds. The quickest way to reach him was by courier, and a dust-covered trooper rode into old Camp Harney, with orders for Major Otis to send the despatches he bore, with all speed, on to Warner—150 miles away, over desert and mountain. Major Otis was troubled; but his adjutant put an end to the worry. Lieutenant Roe said he could get that despatch over those one hundred and fifty miles as quick as anybody—and on him fell the responsibility. Taking only a sergeant and one private, with two days' cooked rations (hardtack and bacon) in their haversacks, Roe and his comrades started. His orders were to get to Warner as quickly as possible, "without regard to horseflesh."

CHARLES F. ROE MAKING HIS FAMOUS RIDE TO CAMP WARNER.

It was just eight when they jogged out of Camp Harney. The first twenty-five miles lay along the valley of Silver creek. Then came fifty miles, or more, of sage brush and alkali. Once clear of the garrison, Roe struck a trot and, maintaining this gait wherever possible, went on all night long, until 5 A.M., when he halted, unsaddled, and fed from the nosebags, in the middle of the desert. A tin mug of coffee and a bit of bacon was enough for him and his men. At six, they were away again, with the worst stretch of all ahead. No human habitation within fifty miles; the sand fetlock-deep; Warner Lake water densely alkaline, burning the skin from lips and mouth. Yet on they went, seven miles an hour, and rode into Camp Warner just at tattoo—8 P.M.—having made the one hundred and fifty miles in twenty-four hours; actual riding time, twenty-two and one-half hours. So far from being used up, Lieutenant Roe went on with Captain Hall, the commanding officer referred to, leaving his horses to rest at Warner and turn out for inspection next morning in prime condition.

This ride was made without previous special training of either horse or man—almost continuously at the "jog trot," through a desolate country, and just twelve hours quicker than experts at Camp Harney thought it possible to cover the distance and land the party, riders and mounts, fit for another brush the next day.

Another plucky ride was that of Lieutenant James F. Bell, now adjutant of the Seventh cavalry, through the Bad Lands of Dakota. Going into Medora, a little town at the crossing of the Little Missouri by the Northern Pacific railway, he found important despatches for his brother

officer, Lieutenant Garlington, then in the field, and, all alone, Bell rode away from Medora at sunrise on an August morning, covered fifty to fifty-five miles through the roughest country in the Northwest by noon, got a fresh mount in in Captain Varnum's camp, and just after sunset reached Garlington. The distance covered was at least one hundred miles, and the gait was trot or gallop all the way.

The records of the cavalry regiments on duty in Arizona or Wyoming during the Indian campaigns of the last twenty years furnish numerous instances of long rides of this character.

The annals of the great war have many more—perhaps the most remarkable being that of Henry Kyd Douglas, now Adjutant-General of Maryland, but at the time a young officer selected to bear despatches for Stonewall Jackson, through pitchy darkness, over river and mountain, from Harrisonburg in the Shenandoah valley, around Massanutten mountain, over the Blue Ridge through Swift Run gap, then by way of Stannardsville, Madison Court-House, Culpeper, and Brandy Station, to General Ewell, then "in the field." Douglas started just after sundown of an April evening, and in a pouring rain splashed through mud and mire and the blackness of Erebus over the mountain trail; exchanged his gallant blooded mare for a big, raw-boned racer some forty miles from the starting-point; used up mount No. 2 in a fifteen-mile spurt to Madison C. H., where he swapped him for a little gray which stumbled in the mire and darkness after a run of barely a mile, and could not be induced to rise. The magic of Jackson's name won him mount No. 4, who carried him nine miles and gave place to a gaunt roan. The next stage was the eleven-mile dash to Culpeper, where, in the faint, cold glimmer of dawn, the young officer reached General Dick Taylor, who steered him on to Brandy Station and beyond. Just twenty hours from the start, Douglas found General Ewell and delivered his rain-soaked despatches. He had covered the entire distance of one hundred and five miles in less than twenty hours, and the worst eighty miles of it in less than ten. Delays, due to loss of the road in one place and of the little gray in another, had made havoc with the record, after an admirable start. Douglas used five horses in all, Bell two, Roe only one.

SHORT NIGHT'S REST ON A LONG MARCH IN THE BAD LANDS.

panied by three or four officers and twelve to fifteen seamen. So far as the worthy captain was himself concerned, the little affair, disagreeable enough for a while to him as to us, produced quite a warm feeling towards him throughout the whole community, and a stir to good and loyal sentiment towards our protectors whether on the water or on land; and had the Confederate cavalry come upon us just then, they would scarce have found so many to welcome them and to help on the seizure of the "Maryland" as they would have found a fortnight earlier. Upon such seemingly slight things does the turn of the tide often depend.

There was a court-martial ordered in the case, of course; but pending final decision in the premises, the "Currituck" was herself ordered away; and the whole affair, however important in the annals of the defense of Havre de Grace and in the story of the protection of the "Maryland," quickly became but a little forgotten local episode among the side-issues of the war.

WM. CHAUNCY LANGDON.

THE TRIALS OF STAFF-OFFICERS.

THE AIDE-DE-CAMP.

It is many a long month since the first paper of this series, designed only for military readers, was written. It began, some six or eight years ago, with "The Adjutant." Later came "The Ordnance Officer;" then a succession of papers on "Experiences at the Military Academy;" and then a long hiatus. The kindly pages of the only magazine we of the services could call our own passed into other hands and soon faded from the sight of all. But now, like "that feathered incombustible—the Phœnix," our old stand-by has arisen from its own ashes, and The United Service once more sounds the assembly for its corps of contributors. Some of them, like the octogenarian soldier-scholar Siddons,—long the dean of our little band,—and gallant Upton, author and tactician, have laid down pen and sword forever, and respond no more to mortal call. Others sail their ships on distant seas, and have not yet received their initial number of the resurrected monthly; but there is still a strong percentage of the guild flocking readily to the old standard, and among them none responds more gladly than he who owes to these familiar pages his introduction to an indulgent public,—the garrulous "Mr. X."

Who but soldiers or sailors could possibly care for a continuation of that old time-worn tale of the trials of a subaltern in various *rôles* outside the "line of file-closers"? But the editors prescribe the dose, and this particular compounder of literary drugs can only obey and resume the series, although it is Mr. X.'s profound conviction that he has had more fun out of it all than anybody else; and he laughs most and swore least over his trials and perturbations when serving as aide-de-camp.

Yet it was an odd experience. Late in the fall of 1871 "The Department of the Gulf" was re-created, and a gallant old soldier who had well served his country during the War of the Rebellion was ordered to New Orleans to assume command. Now the complications began at the very start, and any subaltern who has half an hour to spare and hasn't already found out for himself how easy it is to get into scrapes, may pick up an idea or two on the subject or be lulled to

placid slumber by reading what follows and noting the dates. With a leave of absence for thirty days in his pocket, Mr. X. was, on the 24th of October, relieved, at his own request, from duty at West Point and ordered to join his regiment. At that moment his troop was stationed at Fort D. A. Russell, Wyoming, and there he would be due in time to be accounted present with the command on the 24th of November. While visiting friends in Philadelphia he was surprised to read in the morning papers that his regiment was ordered to Arizona forthwith, and, unless Mr. X. preferred to pay his own way around to the mouth of the Colorado,—a thing that it is perhaps unnecessary to remark he could not have done if he had turned into cash every possession he had in the world,—it behooved Mr. X. to drop his long-looked-for month's leave and hasten to the Plains. Quitting Philadelphia that night and dropping in at the War Department the next morning to inquire how much time he could possibly spare *en route*, he was told that the colonel of the regiment was now in town and it would be well to see him at once,—he had just come in from head-quarters at Fort McPherson. Now this colonel was the identical old soldier who was selected to command the re-created department. Mr. X. had never met him before in his life, and was simply astonished when almost the first question asked him was, "How would you like to go to New Orleans as aide-de-camp?" Afterwards it was less difficult for Mr. X. to account for it when he learned that there were half a dozen officers whom the brevet major-general well knew, all of whom wanted to go, and, being at a loss how to decide between them, he solved the problem to his temporary satisfaction by hitting on a youngster whom he knew only by hearsay, and Rumor in this instance, it would seem, had been unusually kind. Mr. X. had been in New Orleans as subaltern in a light battery under the administrations of Generals Sheridan, Mower, Hancock, and Buchanan, and did not like it at all. But that was just after the war, and things might have changed for the better. There was something alluring about the idea of being there in the Crescent City as a staff-officer, occupying pleasant quarters in town instead of a single room in a ramshackle old hospital building down at Jackson Barracks, and going occasionally to the opera instead of perpetually to the stables. Mr. X. bethought him of the good times those fellows seemed to have who were aides-de-camp in the days when he was "chief of line of caissons,"—and what swells they were!—"Sandy" Forsyth and Schuyler Crosby, Mitchell and "Billy" Wilson, handsome Will Russell and "Ike" De Russy. It was sore temptation, and Mr. X. said he didn't know much about A.D.C. work, but he would be glad to try.

Then it transpired that there were some patriotic officials high in rank in the civil service—and one or two not wholly disconnected with the military—each of whom had sons, sons-in-law, brothers, nephews, or grandsons in the army, from among whom quite a list of aspirants

appeared for the three positions which the brevet major-general had to confer as his personal staff. The list was daily increasing, and the warm-hearted old soldier was visibly embarrassed. These officials were not infrequently personal friends of long standing,—men to whom he hated to say "No," although he did not hesitate to say to officers of his circle at the national capital that the relations with whom they desired to fill his staff were mostly men who would be of no use to him. Frankly he told Mr. X. that he really did not know how to decide it, and as frankly Mr. X. told the general not to allow the offer made on the spur of the moment to have the slightest weight in his ultimate decision,—and started forthwith for the frontier; paid a brief visit to the Second Cavalry at Omaha Barracks; had several days of joyous hunting around Fort McPherson with "Buffalo Bill" and a host of good fellows of his own regiment; reached Cheyenne and Fort Russell about the middle of November and was introduced to his new troop by the senior captain; and—that very afternoon received telegraphic orders to return to McPherson and report to the brevet major-general for duty as aide-de-camp, and, despite a snow blockade, he reached there, on a "plug" and under a plug hat, to the huge amusement of the garrison, late the following night. In two days we were off for New Orleans, Mr. X. accompanying his chief and performing his functions as A.D.C. as well as he knew how; doing a good deal of writing from the general's dictation, and "filing" numerous dispatches that greeted him *en route;* stopped with him two days at General Halleck's head-quarters, where, owing to the disturbed condition of political affairs in Louisiana, an extended conference seemed necessary; reached with him the city of New Orleans on the evening of November 27; wrote at his dictation the order assuming command on the morning of the 28th and announcing Mr. X. as A.D.C., A.A.A.G., and possibly one or two other alphabetical combinations; drew his pay from the newly-announced chief paymaster of the Gulf, and, long years afterwards, was compelled to refund much of that drawn as aide-de-camp, and to see four days' pay stopped against him as having been *absent without leave* from November 24 to November 28.

"Why, certainly!" was the explanation of the astute functionary who made the decision in the auditor's office. "It's as plain as day. Mr. X. was on leave from October 24 to November 24. You cannot show a paper which anywhere reports him present on the latter date. There's a hiatus in his record from November 24 until he turns up way down here in New Orleans on the 28th of November. Of course we must stop his pay."

"But," argued the friend to whom Mr. X. had intrusted the case,—he himself being miles and miles away,—"here's his order from the War Department, dated November 3, to report in person without delay to Colonel and Brevet Major-General —— for duty as aide-de-

camp. He did so report on the 15th of November or thereabouts, and was actually on duty with him, traveling with him *en route* to their department from that time until the 28th. He was in the execution of his office and in obedience to his orders. How the devil can you say he was absent without leave?"

"Oh, *I* don't say that. That's the adjutant-general's business. That's what *his* returns say, and I simply act accordingly. What I stopped was his pay as aide-de-camp. He drew pay as such from the date of the War Department order, whereas he wasn't announced in orders as aide-de-camp until the 28th."

"And yet you know that he was ordered to report in person and without delay early in November. Do you mean to say that, having done so and having performed duty as such, he can't have pay for it?"

"That's the size of it exactly. We have nothing to show affirmatively that he *was* on such duty, and the adjutant-general signs an official report which assures us that from the 24th to the 28th, at least, so far from performing *any* duty, he was absent from all. Now *there's* the fellow you want to get after; go and blaspheme him."

But this Mr. X.'s friend decided not to do. He had no especial objection to going and stirring up the animals in the auditor's office. They were civilians and personal acquaintances. He could not feel so thoroughly at ease with the grand panjandrum at head-quarters of the army, and so, finding that the flaw was there and not at the Treasury, Mr. X. sat him down and wrote a subordinate letter to the adjutant-general requesting that the case might be reopened and the decision of his predecessor—so long concealed from the party most interested—might be reversed, and the imputation that he was absent without leave when he was doing his level best on duty be blotted from his record. This was promptly done, but Mr. X. only temporarily enjoyed the pay of aide-de-camp from the date of the order directing him to report as such. The stern guardians of the people's money compelled him to refund and be content with half.

The new department commander and his aide-de-camp were speedily settled in a building a couple of squares higher up Camp Street than the old hotel which so long served as head-quarters Department of the Gulf. A second aide had been decided upon and applied for but had not yet arrived. An old and valued friend had been called from his regiment and installed as adjutant-general; Mr. X. was directed to assume the functions of judge-advocate in addition to those of A.D.C. Clerks were obtained and put to work in the former's office, but Mr. X. was compelled to be his own,—there being a limit to the number allowed. More than this, it most naturally happened that, as the general had dictated all his correspondence to his aide on the way thither, and as the latter could "take him down" almost as rapidly as the chief could talk, the practice was continued on arriving at the new station. It

presently transpired that the general would have no amanuensis but Mr. X., and that his official correspondence was assuming huge dimensions. Now it was not that Mr. X. objected to the amanuensis work. He could not write short-hand, but he had a system of abbreviations, learned years before when acting secretary of a college faculty, that enabled him to "take down" from dictation quite rapidly; it was the plodding labor of making "fair copies" that wore upon him, and for reasons best known to himself the general wanted these fair copies in no hand but that of his aide-de-camp. The half-dozen clerks were not allowed to touch them except in putting them through the copying-press. Every day the political situation became more critical. Two factions were in the field, known respectively as the Warmouth and Carter parties,—both Republican,—and each striving to oust the other. Warmouth, as governor of the State, with just a little more than half the legislature, occupied the great stone temporary state-house on Dryades Street. Carter, with a very little less than half the same legislature, had seceded from the main body and established separate quarters on Royal Street. Neither side had a quorum, but the instant any one of Warmouth's legislators issued from the Dryades Street building he was borne off in triumph and penned up with the other crowd. (One fellow who resisted and showed fight was shot to death almost under the windows of the state-house.) Warmouth mustered all his police,—armed and equipped as infantry and artillery and organized as battalions and battery,—posted them around his citadel to repel threatened attack, and cooped all his legislature within its walls, for Carter was rapidly getting a quorum at his expense. Then both sides came clamoring to the general claiming United States support. On one side was the governor and a legal but attenuated legislature occupying the recognized state-house. On the other were the seceding legislators and their Speaker, backed, oddly enough, by the highest Federal officials in Louisiana. The brother-in-law of the President of the United States as collector of customs, and the United States marshal, followed by nearly all the Federal judges, the postmaster, etc., were in open sympathy with the Carterites, and the party of the latter speedily became known as the Custom-House party from this very fact. Now between these two conflicting influences the general was presently driven almost mad. He had not been in town a month before the thing was a serious source of worry, and on the 3d of January it was at fever-heat. Mr. X., who had been sent up to Mississippi to look into some court-martial business, was wired to hasten back, and, reaching head-quarters, he found it looking as it might have done in the liveliest days of the war. Orderlies and ambulances, cabs and carriages, were thick around the *banquette* without, and politicians of all grades thronged within. The ultimatum had gone forth,—Carter and his party, "backed by an indignant populace," were to assault the state-house and expel Warmouth and

his legislators *vi et armis.* Whichever side could show the people that it was supported by the strong arm of the general government was sure to win. Therefore neither side gave the general an instant of peace. All that day and much of the night was he besieged by politicians representing both factions,—first one, then the other. Every hour of the twenty-four he was firing dispatches to Washington urging that instructions be given him as to what he should do under such perplexing conditions. Mr. X. wrote and copied, wrote, copied, and rewrote all the livelong day and late into the night, was aroused at 3.30 A.M. by his night-gowned chief, who was suddenly struck with ideas that were "most important," and, having no note-book of his own, stirred up his amanuensis, and the work of dictation, etc., began again, for the good old chief was worried almost out of his wits and had no rest at all.

In dictating it was the general's wont to parade slowly up and down the floor, his hands clasped behind his back, his head drooping to the front. He was never satisfied with his own phraseology, but made perpetual corrections, substitutions, and interlineations, so that by the time the dispatch or letter was written in the rough it was a labyrinth of ink-scrawls. At last, however, it would appear to read to his satisfaction, and his eyes would sparkle and his kindly face would beam with content and gratification. "How does that strike you, X.? Isn't that all right? Won't those fellows at Washington catch the exact idea of the situation from that?" Mr. X., who was having his first experience with politicians, and didn't know which side to believe, thought that it covered the case as well as anything he could conceive of, and would then be remanded to his desk to make a fair copy. It might be a letter anywhere from three to eight pages in length, and had to be "done" in copying-ink, so that an imprint could be taken in the letter-press books. Just about as he was carefully finishing the last lines, in would pop the general,—half-dressed perhaps by this time. "Wait a moment, X.! Hold on! It has just occurred to me—most important! Add there after 'repeal of the obnoxious laws' these words." And then would come an interlineation that would involve explanations as to some other paragraph, and before he knew it the blessed old chief would have that long-winded dispatch all tangled up and twisted out of shape, and then when it was fairly straightened another copy, of course, would have to be made, and the sleepy A.D.C. would wearily plod through it all again. At last, in the chill of the wintry dawn, the fair copy would be ready (after all, it was perhaps nothing more than a long dispatch to go by telegraph where calligraphy didn't count), and then would come brief respite. But if that dispatch did not go to the office of the Western Union within ten minutes of its final completion it meant more trouble and lots of it for Mr. X. Breakfast, or an item in the morning paper, a hint from an "early bird" from among the contending fac-

tions, would seem to give the general increased or modified ideas as to the matter at issue, suggest other alterations, and, pen in hand, the amanuensis would drop into his chair in the general's private office, while the chief resumed his tramp up and down the floor and the remodeling of that dispatch. Then the adjutant-general's clerks would begin to arrive, and, having made the third or fourth copy, X. would inquire if *now* it should be sent to the office. "Well, wait a moment until So-and-so comes in," would be the answer. "Let's see how *he* likes it." And presently "So-and-so" would appear. "Now, X., read it aloud, and, ——, you listen and give me your views." Of course the listener was sure to knit his brows or purse up his lips or ponder gravely over some paragraph or sentence,—sure to suggest some addition or erasure, and the general almost as sure to eagerly accept the idea; and away Mr. X. would travel with his mutilated pages and sit him down at the desk in the front office to make fair copy number four. Half or three-quarters of an hour might be consumed; the general trotting in every little while to glance over his shoulder and see how things were going and to totter on the verge of new alterations. At last it would be finished, and then in would come the commanding officer from the barracks,—himself a brevet major-general and a man of wide experience. "Here! the very man! General, just listen to this, will you? and tell me what you think of it. Now then, X., read it again, like a good fellow." And obediently X. would read, and just as surely would the new arrival look wise, hum and haw, and presently, "Well —I—think—that—perhaps—a little change on the third page—— Would you just read that again, Mr. X.?" And then more alterations would ensue; fair copy number five be painfully written out just in time to welcome another arrival,—an officer high in rank in the supply department and deep in the confidences of the Custom-House party; a man of many eccentricities and much information; a born politician and a fellow of no small influence. For months no dispatch of any consequence went out of that office until it had been pronounced upon by him, and that always meant extra work for Mr. X. The general leaned naturally upon the advice of a man who had been stationed in New Orleans ever since the close of the war and knew all the raft of statesmen, black and white, with which the commonwealth was glutted; and despite the fact of his strong leaning towards the side of one party, this prominent personage had a supervisory interest in pretty much every report or letter sent from head-quarters to Washington, and those which were not materially amended at his suggestion could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

During the three or four periods of riot and insurrection that prevailed in the Crescent City during his tour there on staff duty Mr. X.'s official life was thereby made a burden to him. "In multitude of counsels there is wisdom," but it was wear and tear for the unlucky A.D.C.

who had thus become amanuensis and private secretary. Rarely did it happen that he made less than four copies of a dispatch or letter before it was considered properly phrased and ready for Washington. One day —and this is an actual fact—he made eleven fair copies of a long dispatch before it was finally sent. Meantime it had been read to and corrected by no less than seven different men.

Other aides-de-camp had joined, but only on one memorable occasion was either clerk or officer allowed by the chief to take Mr. X.'s place at the desk. Not that Mr. X. would have objected. He more than once ventured to beg the general to let the clerks help out a little in the copying, but the old soldier had some notions in which he was tenacity itself, and so it resulted that the letter-press books at department head-quarters were stacked high in their niche on the shelves, and every one of them was crammed with the imprinted calligraphy of the junior aide. But he saw only the beginning of this in the momentous days of January, 1872, and even then was thankful for something outside.

In response to all the urgent dispatches sent to Washington there came no really satisfactory answer. The Administration was evidently in a grievous quandary, and contented itself with assuring the chief that it had every confidence in his ability "in the exercise of a wise discretion" to control the situation. There was no question that he could knock a mob endwise if a mob ventured to make trouble, but what he needed was something from the general government in the way of recognition of one or other of the two factions. Warmouth by January 4 had some five hundred uniformed and fairly disciplined troops under such soldiers as Longstreet, late of the Confederacy, and Hugh J. Campbell, and with these he declared he would defeat any attack made upon the state-house. Carter, with probably the better half of the legislature and the avowed sympathy of the Custom-House party and the public, could doubtless raise a force of several thousand citizens to oust the governor and his people. Between them the United States attempted to be perfectly neutral, yet instructed its local department commander to hold his troops in readiness to preserve the peace. The question left for him to determine was which side was the disturber thereof?

Mr. X. had been writing much of the night, all the morning of the 3d, and most of the afternoon, but the general slipped away from the office about 5 P.M., taking Mr. X. with him, and together they dined and hoped for a few moments of peaceful enjoyment of their cigars. It was not to be, however. Orderlies came hurrying from the adjutant-general with dispatches from Washington and the intimation that some of the governor's staff begged to see the chief at once. All that evening more letters and telegrams; a constant rush of excited politicians; the United States marshal; the collector; the mayor; the Speaker of the exiled house and head of the uprising,—Mr. Carter,—

with various eloquent and energetic officials, including our high staff-officer, representing one side, and Generals Longstreet and Campbell, the governor's private secretary, and that adroit and wonderful general-utility-man of the Warmouth faction, Mr. George A. Sheridan, the other. All was excitement; all anxiety; by 11 P.M. the chief had had as much of conflicting (mis) statement as he could stand. He would have no more backing and filling on part of the contestants. Carter wouldn't promise not to attack the state-house; Warmouth wouldn't promise anything, and a fight was the only possible outcome. At 11 P.M. the general came out of his last conference with blood in his eye. "Go and get into uniform, Mr. X. I shall want you for other work than this, sir." And jumping into a cab, Mr. X. went rattling up Camp Street to his quarters, glad enough to get out into the cool night air. The chest with his horse equipments, sabre, spurs, boots, etc., was still somewhere between Wyoming and the swamps of Louisiana, but he borrowed a sword and hastened back to head-quarters. At one o'clock, mounted on a "flea-bitten" quadruped from the quartermaster's stables, he was dispatched to Jackson Barracks, six miles away down the sweeping curve of the gas-lighted levee, with orders to rouse the garrison (six companies of infantry) and march them up to town and post them before daybreak in an old cotton warehouse not far from head-quarters. Heavens! what comfort it was to be again in saddle and jogging down that familiar old road! At two o'clock the sentry at the sally-port challenged the arriving staff-officer, and in five minutes the gray-haired old commander was out on his piazza sending messengers for his adjutant and the officer of the day. An hour before sunrise the long column filed silently into the designated enclosure, built its fires back of the stacked arms, and began to "cook" coffee, while Mr. X. went back to report their presence to his chief and get an hour's snooze.

Lots of dictation; lots of desk-work; lots of threatening reports from both sides all day long, but no serious conflict. A shooting-scrape or two and much vituperation was all that actually took place; but now the Carter party came out with a new scare. Relying on the discipline of his police and uniformed militia,—all old soldiers,—Warmouth was going to put an end to the matter by marching to disperse the "insurgent legislature" in session on Royal Street over "the Gem." When the morning of the 5th dawned on New Orleans there was every prospect of a lively fight. Thousands of citizens, said the Carterites, incensed at Warmouth's threat and what Judge Moncure styled his "ruinous and tyrannical rule," had pledged themselves to his support and defense. In the state-house had passed a unanimous resolution that George W. Carter and his followers should be admitted on no pretext whatever, and Governor Warmouth called forth rousing cheers by the assertion that the President of the United States had denounced the action of the Federal authorities in attempting to arrest him on the previous day

and had promised the immediate "investigation" of the marshal. State Senator Campbell, in the full uniform of a major-general, aroused the hopes and spirits of the legislature to the highest pitch by the announcement that the United States forces were to be placed at once at the disposal of the governor, and this being speedily noised abroad, there came man after man of the Custom-House party rattling up in cabs to inquire of the already exasperated chief if this were so, and going back post-haste to assure the Carterites that it was a whapping lie.

Things were enough to stir the bile of the placidest man in America that morning. The one thing the general had to be especially cautious about was the appearance of actively aiding with the force at his command either one of the contestants. The one thing both of them seemed bent on was to wring from him some admission which might be distorted into a promise of positive support. No sooner were the Carterites satisfied that the general had not placed his troops at the disposal of the governor than the announcement was made to a thronging mass of people in Royal Street. The United States flag was displayed, and cheer upon cheer resounded through the district. Then came the proposition to gather and arm the citizens and wind up Warmouth that very afternoon, and at eleven o'clock up came aides and secretaries of the governor—full tilt—warning the general of the wrath to come and begging the immediate aid of the United States to preserve the peace and prevent riot and bloodshed. Again Mr. X.'s pen went whizzing over sheet after sheet of dispatch paper. Longstreet and Mr. Sheridan declared that according to their information a mob of two thousand men, all ex-Confederate soldiers, was now in march on the state-house, and the governor desired the general to know that he considered himself "in imminent danger." Every new arrival added to the apparent excitement and the chief got fairly worked up. "Mount your horse, sir. Gallop to the Vicksburg Press (the old cotton warehouse aforementioned) and get the command under arms instantly. Then report here to me," were his orders, and Mr. X. went clattering down St. Joseph Street; and at his shout of "Fall in!" the whole Nineteenth Infantry, assembled there by this time, dropped their cups and mess-kits and sprang for their arms. A word with their veteran commander, and X. was on his way back. A curious throng of spectators had gathered about head-quarters, and, out on the *banquette*, tramping up and down in his favorite "plug" hat and expediting with no little energy and some profanity the movements of one or two messengers, was the general himself. The crowd gathered around them as Mr. X. reported his orders executed, and evidently wanted to hear all that took place, whereat the chief turned fiercely upon them and ordered the rabble to scatter,—and scatter they did, some genuinely scared at the vehemence of the peppery old soldier, others gleefully laughing, none of them scowling or sullen. "Now, sir," said he, "ride at once

to the state-house. Tell Governor Warmouth that I have received his message regarding the anticipated attack by the mob; that the troops are here and ready to defend him if assailed; on the approach of the mob he may send you or one of his own agents to me for them. Meantime, you remain on your horse in front of the building to represent the United States."

Mr. X. thoroughly understood as he galloped away that these words were to be delivered *verbatim* as nearly as possible, and that on no account was he to intimate to the governor that the troops were to be under his orders or "at his disposal," or, in fact, sent to him for any purpose whatsoever but defense against imminent danger. That had all been talked over between the general and the aide that very morning. He grinned considerably, did Mr. X., at the idea of his "representing the United States," though there was nothing so odd about it (time and again, afterwards, did not the mob leaders say that if the general would send so much as a single corporal they would disperse at his request?), but what he was keeping most assiduously in mind was the exact language of the general's message. Five minutes' rapid trot brought him to the Dryades Street approach to the Mechanics' Institute, the scene of the bloody riot of July, 1866, and here, while all the neighborhood was thronged with silent and curious spectators, the streets were blocked by solid ranks of infantry, armed with the Winchester rifle, stretching from wall to wall and uniformed in the dress of the New Orleans police. Within their lines were the guns—Napoleons—and the cannoneers lounging about. Cannon and Winchesters guarded the entrance to the state-house itself, and police, armed to the teeth, crowded the winding stone stairways. Mr. X. threw his reins to one of these whom an officer sharply ordered to "fall out" for the purpose, elbowed his way through the densely-packed array of guards, and presently reached the second story and the portals to the halls of legislation. These were shut and closely watched within. Rapping with the hilt of his borrowed sword, Mr. X. waited a moment and looked about him in the dimly-lighted corridor. Armed men everywhere, all eager with apparent desire to know the nature of his errand. The door was cautiously opened a few inches and a black face appeared,—half of one, at least,—and at sight of the cavalry uniform the door-keeper's mouth expanded a little.

"I have a message for the governor; is he here?" asked Mr. X.

"That's him," answered the guardian, as he pointed to a tall figure writing at a desk on the left of the middle aisle; and thither went Mr. X., his spurs clinking over the threshold.

The instant the door was opened about half a hundred legislators, black and white, all anxious, all hungry-eyed, all looking as though they had lived in their clothes for a week past, turned eagerly towards it. Then at sight of the uniform numbers of them came scrambling

over the desks. Even some of the armed guards at the big windows quit their posts and came over towards the centre aisle. The governor looked up in surprise at the sudden cessation of talk and found Mr. X. almost at his side. It was their first meeting, but the latter never forgot it. As concisely, and as nearly as possible in the words of his general, the aide delivered his message, never for an instant forgetting that he was in no wise to convey the impression that the United States troops were sent for any purpose except to defend the governor in case of attack. Mr. Warmouth had arisen as Mr. X. accosted him, and stood gazing benignantly down from his height of six feet two or three, and Mr. X. felt confident from the expression on the governor's handsome face that the latter fully understood the guarded nature of the communication. There was a twinkle of the eyes and a twitch about the corners of the mouth hidden by that heavy moustache that seemed to say the shrewd politician rather enjoyed this evidence of the old general's appreciation of the situation, but he was all stately courtesy in his reply. He thanked the general, he said, for his prompt response to his appeal in the interests of peace and good order, and begged the aide to make himself at home in his private room for the present. Mr. X. declined, saying that his orders required him to remain in saddle in front of the building, faced about, and without another word to anybody but General Longstreet, whom he met in front and who wanted to know how long it would take the United States troops to get to the spot, remounted, rode into the middle of the street and sat there,—a five-foot-five embodiment of the majesty of the law and the power of the general government on a flea-bitten old wreck from the quartermaster's stable. The crowd out in Canal Street, looking on in idle curiosity at the bellicose situation at the Institute, neither increased nor diminished at sight of this formidable mounted reinforcement to the defenses. The police, standing with ordered arms and "in place, rest," in solid, silent double ranks across the street, looked the staff-officer over from top to toe (without having very far for the eye to travel), and doubtless wondered what possessed him to be sitting out there all alone. A brother aide-de-camp coming down the sidewalk in civilian dress with another message gleefully hailed him with, "Hello, X.! I've heard of the equestrian statue of General Jackson for the last thirty years, but I thought it was down by the French market somewhere!" By and by the drums of the Nineteenth Infantry were heard over on Rampart Street, and the adjutant shoved his way through the crowd and was saluted by the police sentries as he appeared and reported to Mr. X. that the troops were on the ground awaiting orders. Two o'clock came and no assault,—no signs of such a thing,—then a messenger from head-quarters to Mr. X. with instructions to conduct the troops from their position on Rampart Street down to the custom-house,—notifying the governor of the change.

The governor most impressively desired the aide, in the presence of a crowd of satellites, to present his thanks to the general "for the prompt manner in which he co-operated with me in preserving the public peace" (Mr. X. "took down" the words before he remounted, and copied them in ink in his personal diary that afternoon, so that here they are to-day); and when all seemed quiet again and the threatened riot had failed to materialize, he rode back to head-quarters comparatively well satisfied with his day's work.

The newsboys were yelling "Extry!" and rushing about the streets with evening editions of *The Times*, then the most prominent paper of the city and confessedly "run" in the Warmouth interests. A group of officers of the Nineteenth, standing on the *banquette* and reading the glaring head-lines, shouted laughing greeting to Mr. X. and hailed him with such chaff as, "How are you, 'moral effect'?" "Say, X., what was the use of marching us fellows down there, anyhow? that horse of yours would scare the average mob out of existence." This was all very well in its way, but presently came another side. Half-way up to head-quarters a messenger sprang out of a street-car! "The general wants to see you at once, sir." Two blocks farther along a brother aide came dashing down in a cab and shouted to the driver and to X. at one and the same time, "Hay! Hold on!" "What's the matter?" queried X., his rickety steed gladly and promptly halting. "The general wants to see you right off. Something's wrong!" Dismounting at head-quarters, X. found the lower hall-way well filled with officers of various grades but uniform expression of countenance,—that funereal gloom and "Oh!-*haven't*-you-put-your-foot-in-it?" air which other aides or adjutants may have noted. Up-stairs there was the sound of the general's voice. No need to tell "something's wrong." He was tramping up and down the floor overwrought with excitement and wrath, and there in the corner sat the politico-military supply department staff-officer of high rank with an expression of "Oh, I wouldn't be in your place for anything" on his keen old face. The adjutant-general was there too, silent and concerned, and the atmosphere was pregnant with gloom as Mr. X. briskly entered, all aglow from his rapid exercise. Every man in the room but him seemed to have a copy of the "extry." The general was fairly quivering with excitement:

"My God, sir! *My* God, sir! You—you've ruined me! You've knifed me! If they don't instantly relieve me—disgrace me at Washington, it won't be your fault, sir!" And the general paused, too much overcome to go further.

"What on earth's the matter?" was the natural inquiry. The general could only hand him the paper.

"After all my caution, sir. Look at that!"

Mr. X. took the paper, and there in the "official" record of the day's proceedings appeared these words, omitting names:

"HOUSE—REGULAR SESSION.

"Speaker Brewster called the House to order at 12 M.

"Captain ——, aide to General ——, was admitted by the doorkeeper. That officer proceeded to the first seat of the centre aisle, to Governor Warmouth, and informed him that the national troops were at his (the governor's) service to aid in preserving peace and order and in suppressing any riot or disturbance.

"The governor desired Captain —— to await instructions in his parlor."

Then in the local column was this: that the officer bearing the message had placed the troops in position "subject to the order of his Excellency."

"There, sir! Could you have put it worse than that, sir? And what possessed you to go into the governor's parlor and drink champagne with him?"

"I didn't!" said Mr. X., stoutly and indignantly.

"Why, General —— here *says* you did," persisted the chief.

"Oh—ah—pardon me, general, I merely said I *heard* he had. I knew some of the officers were invited in and went, and I supposed——"

"Damn your suppositions!" thought Mr. X., though discipline kept him silent. He was raging with indignation over the whole business by that time. Despite his utmost caution, the henchmen of the governor had put in his mouth words he had never used, and conveyed to the public an impression most favorable to the struggling executive and damaging to the general. He was cut to the quick, too, was Mr. X., at having been so misrepresented. He well knew how keenly the general felt the false position in which he was placed by these newspaper lies, and therefore as quietly as possible told him just what he had said to the governor, and begged his general's permission to go at once to that functionary and have it out with him.

Just what Mr. X. said this time to the executive of Louisiana he does not so clearly remember. He was wrathful from top to toe and quivering with indignation as he exhibited the paper to the courtly governor and told him what censure and wrong had been heaped upon him as a consequence. But Mr. Warmouth beamed upon him with a face full of indulgent and kindly sympathy.

"Nothing, my dear sir, has distressed me more to-day than to hear that you have got into trouble through the errors of the press, but you surely do not imagine that these misleading statements were with my knowledge and consent?"

Well, possibly they were not, and the general had found out the whole truth by the time Mr. X. got back again, and was all kindness and all regret for his excitement; but Mr. X. had learned a lesson, and

when two or three days afterwards the general charged him in another crisis with another important message to the same official, the aide whipped out pencil and note-book, took down the words *verbatim*, read them over to his chief, who smiled approval, and when at dawn of the January morning Mr. X. was ushered into the presence of the now worn and jaded-looking governor, he very pointedly *read* to him the general's message, and what he thought as he faced about and looked around on the four or five henchmen who were assembled with their leader, was,—omitting some emphatic expletives,—"Now distort *that* if you can!"

But they didn't, though other "trials" speedily followed.

(To be continued.)

THE TRIALS OF STAFF-OFFICERS.

THE AIDE-DE-CAMP.

(Continued from page 210.)

But the experience of the 5th of January was only a preface to a fortnight of the liveliest political entanglements it was ever Mr. X.'s fortune to witness. Our gallant old general was torn by conflicting influences and emotions until the turmoil nearly wore him out. Of course, in all that occurred he had to be incessantly at the office, and conceived it necessary to be firing perpetual reports, dispatches, and requests to Washington. These went by telegraph and by mail, but whether by telegraph or mail, it made no difference: the unlucky Mr. X. was the only amanuensis he would employ and the only copyist he would permit. Hours of each day and night was that badgered aide-de-camp sputtering away with his pen, and then—just as told in the previous chapter—seeing his fair copies mutilated on the arrival of every new-comer. It was a mania of the chief's to read his productions to every official who happened in, and a mania of theirs to suggest alterations which necessitated doing the whole thing over. On the day when Mr. X. had made the eleventh copy of a six-page report, detailed in previous number, his youthful spirit gave way, and he mildly asked the old general as they were in the solitude of the office at dead of night whether he really thought it added anything to the value of his reports that every other government official who dropped in should have a hand in them. "If you'll pardon me for saying so, general," remarked this callow aide, "I believe the War Department wants your opinion of these matters and not that of the community at large. Now, *I* think that report was a good deal better as you first put it than after it had been riddled by the successive suggestions of half a score of people, some of them interested parties."

"Ah, my young friend," was the impressive reply, "that's just where you're wrong. When you get to be my age, you'll think a good deal more of other people's opinions and a good deal less of your own."

This was crushing, of course, but said in no unkind spirit. Mr. X. certainly had his opinion, based possibly on the fact that the burden of all the work fell on his shoulders, that it was all waste of time to ask, one after another, the views of a dozen people, and modify official

documents at the beck of any casual caller from the collector of the port down to a politically-disposed "doctor" out of professional practice. It was a capital scheme, thought Mr. X., if the general *must* have advisers, to summon in three or four at one and the same time, and he so expressed himself. "This subjecting papers to successive critics is weariness and vexation of spirit."

"Perhaps it is to you, X.," said the chief, with one of his rare smiles; "but I can't afford to go wrong. I want advisers."

All the same, it got to be a good deal of a joke around head-quarters. There was a keen young officer attached to the Nineteenth in those days, with, despite certain acerbities, a delicious sense of the humorous and a mimetic faculty few could equal; and as he was daily at the office with his colonel, and could see with half an eye what was going on, he used to "do" the whole scene afterwards for the benefit of his brother officers, and especially could touch up the chief and that eminent politico-military staff department officer before mentioned. Confound those fellows! Sometimes, just for the sake of "putting up a job on X.," haven't they been known to go posting off down Camp Street in search of that old military Macchiavelli and tell him they were just from head-quarters, and that the general had just been reading another long, "most important" dispatch to Washington to General S——, and asking his opinion, and that X. was now at work on the fair copy?

"Hey? Hullo! That so? Guess I'll trot along up there," would be the answer; and presently those swift-footed mules and that rattling old ambulance would come tearing up Camp Street, and then in would saunter "The Chief Conspirator" (as we used to laughingly dub him, and, as I honestly believe, he secretly liked to be called), with his pursed-up lips and wide-open eyes and that expression of imperturbable inquisitiveness about his smooth-shaven face, the whole surmounting a suit of loose, baggy, indescribable garments, the like of which was never seen except on old Uncle Cattermole in "The Private Secretary;" and at sight of him X. would groan and the rest of the staff burst out laughing.

Ah, me! what days of tribulation those were! Let me jot down here some pages from the old diary, giving some real names, others fictitious, omitting many things, inventing none.

Saturday, January 6.—Best chance for row yet if they really mean fight. Wars and rumors of wars all morning, and my desk looks like a paper-mill. Office crowded. Letters, dispatches, etc., every hour, and in intervals of writing am sent to Warmouth. Carterites gobbled three of his legislators, and have them penned up in "The Gem." Warmouth sends writs of *habeas corpus* for 'em. Carter refuses to recognize. Warmouth's friends urge the chief to send troops to help him get 'em. Carter wants troops to defend the "Legislature of Lou-

isiana" against assault. Friends of imprisoned men—notably M. Armand Belot—beg the chief to get him out of durance vile.

The chief trying to establish an armistice. Longstreet sides with him. At 2 P.M. sent with second letter to Warmouth and find him placid and determined. He has excellent legal talent to back him. Police, militia, and our troops all under arms. Opposing parties making huge preparations for battle,—so opposing tale-bearers say. If United States troops were not here there would be a bloody encounter,—say both sides. 4 P.M., *United States troops withdrawn!!* The general disgusted at some new development. Now, then, messieurs, fight it out! Chief orders me down to see the fight (got to state-house on Dryades Street just after column started down Canal to attack "The Gem" on Royal. George Sheridan peeping after them around the corner). No fight. No fun! Cheering, fraternization, and general rejoicing. Can't make out why!

Sunday, 7.—Opens quietly. . . . Warmouth said to be indignant at chief's refusal, yesterday, to lend United States troops to attack "The Gem" and arrest Carterites, but in course of morning requests guards of United States forces to protect his armories, which he reports being mobbed. Sent to investigate "mobbing." Exaggerated. 12 M., Warmouth himself comes to head-quarters, and is now having interview with chief. (Asked that the general should come to see him two days ago. Chief declined.) Long conference, as result of which am on duty at office all day and until midnight writing, writing, writing. Tone of dispatches sombre. Chief and others say trouble is impending, but can't see where.

Monday, 8.—Legal holiday. Battle New Orleans. Longstreet, Mayor Flanders, and Ex-Governor Hahn in early to see the chief. They predict row to-night. Dispatches, of course. Deputation of citizens at 12 M.,—Messrs. W——, W——, and others. (B—— says they are all "rebs.") Situation becoming serious, and dispatches and letters I write for the chief this A.M. full of meaning. At 2 P.M. alarming reports from Warmouth and others. Mob gathering, artillery, etc., to attack state-house. May have row. Mass-meeting to-night to determine. At 4.15 am ordered out to post Nineteenth Infantry. Later, to go and "observe the meeting." 9 P.M., row a farce; meeting a fizzle. These fellows remind me of two big dogs furiously charging each other with a fence between them. Take away the fence (United States troops) and both dogs have business somewhere else. Nevertheless, am in uniform and on duty all night long. More dispatches. The chief begins to yield to pressure for martial law.

Tuesday, 9.—Busy day. . . . Sent to Warmouth during morning. He looks pale and dragged. I feel so. . . . The chief sends dispatch modifying his previous one anent martial law. . . . 4 P.M., Mr. Oglesby, the banker, chairman of citizens' committee, calls. Then more

letters and dispatches. . . . 6 P.M., Warmouth impressively reports the murder, "under the walls of the capitol," of Hon. Mr. Whyling, of his legislature, by Sergeant-at-Arms McCullogh and others of the Carter faction. Carterites say 'twas general scrimmage, in which Whyling was shot by a policeman. So it proves. Good card, governor, and well played, but trumped. . . . On duty at desk and at Warmouth's until midnight, when I got a cup of coffee at Moreau's. To bed at last at 2 A.M.

Wednesday, 10.—Aroused at dawn by knocking at door. Governor's private secretary with important message. Slip into trousers and over to the general's room. (Read that dispatch kneeling by the night-light at the domestic bedside.) Warmouth again wants United States troops to assist in arrest of "insurgents" (presumably Carter legislature). Chief can't see it. Orders me down to investigate; then to carry message to Warmouth (one which I took care to write on back leaf of pocket note-book and read to him *verbatim*, to his Excellency's grim amusement. Neither forgets the perversion of the first one). Found Royal Street blockaded. "Gem" besieged. Three hundred police armed with Winchesters in position in front, but (considerately) refrain from attacking. While waiting for the battle to begin get a bite at Moreau's. 8 A.M., rich! Carter slipped out of "The Gem" before its investment. Report to chief at office. *From 9 A.M. until 11 P.M., the desk.* Dispatches, reports, and the Lord only knows what all. Who wouldn't be on the staff? The worst of it is, the rest of the gang just sit around here, smoke cigarettes, and "wish they were good at amanuensis work!" Sanders, confound him! gets no end of fun out of it. With his eyes twinkling with delight, this afternoon, he sat there chuckling up at Gentry (both, alas! gone from us now), and remarked, "One of the sorrows of my life has always been that I did not acquire a liberal education." He's a humorist, that fellow.

Thursday, 11.—All day at office, writing from dictation the chief's report of the state of affairs. Two hours' steady work finishes the *first* day. There are ten more so far. . . .

Delegations all day. . . . 4 P.M., quiet. Sent out to order three companies back to barracks. Four remain on Magazine Street. . . . 8 P.M., Longstreet reports Carterites making new arrests of Warmouth men. Ordered to remain at office. . . . 11.30 P.M., delegation from citizens' committee arrived with their petition for martial law. Took them up to the general's, on Prytania Street. He had gone to bed, but turned out, wrote his endorsement, and directed me to go with Mr. Clinton (assistant treasurer) to the chairman's,—Mr. Marks,—get his signature, and see it sent by wire. Found Mr. M. at one o'clock. Sent dispatch. Bed 2 A.M.

Friday, 12.— . . . Message from Cotton Exchange 10 A.M., protesting against martial law. Wrote and carried to Mr. Summers, presi-

dent, the chief's reply. He advises their telegraphing their protest direct to Washington. . . . 5 P.M., telegram from Washington. Martial law will not be declared. Quiet in town. All troops sent back to barracks.

First evening to myself.

Saturday, 13.—10.40 A.M., hurried message from Warmouth. Mob again. Seven thousand this time; rapidly organizing to attack him at noon. . . . Troops again ordered up from barracks. Some tall swearing. No row.

Sunday, 14.—Chief disgusted at yesterday's experience. Orders me to write and tell Warmouth he will hereafter refuse troops during present imbroglio. Wrote as directed, and Sanders took it at once. W. asks that the chief "keep it to himself," as it will greatly encourage the Carterites if they find it out. Meantime, made and sent several copies of this correspondence for the chief. . . . At 4 P.M., while still at desk, the rest being gone, Senator Jenks and Mr. Howard came in to say that, owing to rumors that troops had been totally withdrawn, there was sure to be trouble on the morrow. 5 P.M., letter from Warmouth asking for troops to-morrow. General comes back to office and replies. W.'s plea is that the telegraph offices are closed on Sunday, and he cannot apply direct to Washington. Bosh! The chief dictates dispatches to War Department detailing situation. Office begins to fill up. All business again. 8 P.M., Warmouth and Longstreet arrive. Alarming rumors with them. Dispatches from Washington—all seem to come in at once. Now the mayor (Flanders) is alarmed for the peace and safety of his town, and wants protection. . . . 9 P.M., troops recalled to town. (Just won't R–m–gt–n blaspheme?) Those fellows have done nothing but tramp to and fro all this last week. Bad as a campaign against Jackson!

Monday, 15.—Long telegram to adjutant-general begun at 8 A.M., detailing whole situation. Then a letter to Carter. The chief asks *explicit* instructions from Washington.

11 A.M. Hurrah! Dispatch from the President. Previous course approved. Troops not again to be brought into town without orders from Washington. That settles it. Now, then, gentlemen, you've been sp'iling to fight for the last two weeks. Here's your chance. Go it! (But of course they didn't.)

The chief has got a cipher-key from War Department, and important dispatches hereafter are to go in cipher. We try one to-night of no earthly importance, but just as a flyer. The chief merely wants to see how the old thing works. (It doesn't work.) Next day there comes hurried order from Washington to repeat. We do so. It's all Greek to me. And the next thing comes another dispatch: "Impossible to decipher dispatch," or words to that effect. "If important, repeat in plain English." The chief concluded it wasn't important, this

time; but jocular allusions to that cipher business are not permitted—and I know it. (*Note.*—Cipher-keys must always be kept under lock in the securest possible place. This one was—religiously, and for the next ten months.)

Wednesday, 17.—Fun in the Senate. The one cuss who made the quorum, accepted heavy bribes and voted in the repeal of the four laws most obnoxious to the citizens, cleared out for parts unknown, leaving the city minus a legal police and the State government in a regular fix. . . . Carterites now ahead. All quiet now until

Sunday, 21.—Up and at office early. Carter has issued proclamation in this morning's paper announcing his intention of attacking the state-house at noon to-morrow. (He *wants* to be stopped, of course.) Am sent to Longstreet for information 11 A.M. He says Carter has nine hundred men sworn in as sergeants-at-arms, has one hundred and fifty rifles, and by morning will have two hundred and fifty rifles and two pieces of artillery. They are to rendezvous at 43 Dauphine Street. The chief dictates telegrams to Washington giving situation as far as known. Detained all afternoon at office. Mr. Oglesby, the only one who came, much disturbed over the proclamation. 8 P.M., send off telegram to Washington and receive orders to remain in charge at head-quarters for the night. Supper at Victor's 9.30 P.M. Longstreet and two Warmouth men at another table—no one else. "The '76" and "The Council of Twenty-Six"—Ku-Klux organizations—issuing proclamations to abstain from rows to-morrow. . . . Longstreet tells me Carter proposes surprise to-night. All quiet at head-quarters nevertheless.

And so it went—alternate calm and storm—for the first two months of the general's occupation of New Orleans. Then came our next distraction,—a Congressional committee of investigation. It was lovely weather when these gentlemen arrived from Washington, and Mr. X. was notified that, "in addition to his other duties," the general desired him to attend the Congressional committee in whatsoever capacity might be most agreeable to them, with a view to showing them courtesies, escorting them around, etc. Mindful of his expensive experiences at West Point only the two preceding years, Mr. X.'s cup did not o'erflow with joy at the prospect. The commission was presided over by the Hon. Judge Schofield, a gentleman and a believer in human nature. Its liveliest member was a keen, snappy, incisive fellow who bore the oddly appropriate name of Spear, and one after another the witnesses of both factions were made to writhe under his pointed questions. Perhaps the greatest sufferer at his hand was the collector of the port, who, during the split in the State government, had resorted to a humorous but lingering expedient to obstruct the wheels of legislation and rob the Warmouthites of a quorum. Having a fine revenue cutter under his orders, the collector bethought

him of a dinner-party aboard; invited thereto a baker's dozen of the opposing statesmen, and these gudgeons swallowed the bait. When they recovered from the effects of the generous viands and wines, and would be put ashore in time for roll-call and the fall of the Speaker's gavel, lo! they were out at sea; and there they were kept a week, more or less, on an ostensible fishing-trip, the guests of the collector. Mr. X. listened to that examination with sentiments of awe, and was devoutly thankful that his own share in the events of early January had been so inconspicuous that Mr. Spear merely looked him over, and then, like Artemus Ward's firemen friends on a certain momentous occasion, "kindly refrained from squirtin'." It wasn't so much that Mr. X. had anything on his conscience in connection with the recent affairs as that he was morally certain he would be self-convicted of every military crime known to the Mutiny Act before Mr. Spear let go. If ever a man had a simple, straightforward, soldierly story to tell, it was the chief when he took the chair; but when Spear "took the witness" he proceeded to twist him all out of his recollection, mix him up on his facts, and so thoroughly to browbeat and confuse the simple-minded and honest-hearted old soldier that by the time he had finished his evidence he had sworn to saying and doing several things that never happened, and to prohibiting things that actually took place. The astute M.C. looked a complacent victor when he finally released his hold and fancied possibly that it would all make a tremendous stir at the expense of the general, the army, and the administration. But if it did I never heard of it.

However, some kind of truce was patched up after this Congressional visitation, and for quite a while the general was not bothered by local politicians. Things began settling down into their normal condition around head-quarters, and Mr. X., who had been made acting judge-advocate of the department,—"in addition to his other duties," of course,—was trying to review a whole raft of cases, some simple, some complex, when another governor concluded it was necessary to call for troops; at least, some of his underlings were making him think so; and the chief determined to go and look into the matter himself. This time 'twas the governor of Mississippi, and away we went—the chief and Mr. X.—up the road to Jackson.

As a result of the conference that ensued, the general decided to let Mr. X. go and overawe the alleged Ku-Klux in the northern part of the State, while he returned to New Orleans. The "Enforcement Act" was in full swing just then, and a couple of troops of cavalry were at the beck and call of the United States marshals and their deputies, and a good deal of night-riding and devilment was going on.

Armed with an order to inspect four military posts in Mississippi, the aide set forth to see what there was in the blood-curdling stories constantly coming in. It involved much discomfort in the way of

travel through mud, rain, and wood-roads and opened his eyes to the flimsiness of foundation on which big sensations could be built. One deputy marshal had secured a guard of cavalry because of a diabolical outrage perpetrated on himself and family by the Ku-Klux, who had attempted to burn the house over their heads in the dead of the winter's night, and, being discovered, fired volley after volley through the doors and windows. Mr. X. couldn't find a bullet mark on the premises, however, but *did* learn from numerous sources that a crowd of young fellows, riding home late from a country wedding, had saluted the new year with a *feu de joie* from their revolvers; and with this exception there happened to have been no night-firing for a month. The deputy had been making an ass of himself since obtaining his cavalry escort by riding around the country on all manner of errands of imaginary importance and threatening people with arrest and punishment. The officers were disgusted, and begged to be relieved from such duty. So, finding a far better place for the troop on the railway below, Mr. X. recommended its immediate transfer thither, and the deputy lost his imposing escort. But he instantly came forward with fresh outrages, and cited in support that one of his assistants had just been stabbed to death by a violent ex-rebel, but not until a mortal wound had been inflicted on the assailant in self-defense. The bodies, said the dispatch, were now lying side by side at the depot, where he, apparently, could not venture for fear of sharing some similar fate. X. was miles away on another trail by this time, and an experienced officer who had served all through the War of the Rebellion, and was then stationed in the neighborhood, was wired to go thither by first train, investigate, and report. He did. On his arrival he found the two corpses up and taking a sociable drink; so the cavalry were not sent back. But, great Scott! Mr. X. little imagined that this was one of the first episodes to stamp him speedily as a "Southern sympathizer." The others came about in various ways, and here is one of them.

There was in existence in the city of New Orleans, later that year, a fine body of officers and men known as "the Louisiana Field Artillery." For the time being, having neither harness, horses, nor suitable gun-carriages, they were armed and equipped as infantry, and a very natty little battalion they made. One day, late in the spring, a soldierly-looking gentleman came into Mr. X.'s office and, presenting his card, asked to see the general. The chief was rather glad to see anybody just then, for time was hanging heavily on his hands that warm afternoon. The tall stranger was welcomed, had a cordial chat with the chief, and came out radiant. It seems that he was the commandant of the Field Artillery; that the Field Artillery wanted very much to go into camp for a week at Mississippi City, on the Gulf, but that neither tents nor camp-equipage of any kind could they get from the State authorities. As a last resort, Colonel B. came up and

told the general of their plight, and modestly asked if it would be possible to help them in any way. The general knew the command well, and was taken by the courteous and soldierly bearing of their colonel. As a result he assured him that *anything* he controlled was much at the service of the battalion, and directed Mr. X. to go at once with the colonel and attend to it at the chief quartermaster's, the barracks, or wheresoever might be necessary. The colonel hardly knew how to express his delight, and, to make the story short, when the officers met and heard the news they unanimously voted to name their camp after the general, and a very handsome camp it turned out to be. They invited the general and his staff to attend it as honored guests, at least on the great day of the review and ball. It so happened that this was impossible for all, but the chief ordered Mr. X. to take his full uniform, go, and represent him and the staff. Now this was duty that no youngster could cavil at. X. went and had a simply gorgeous time. Nothing that those accomplished hosts could think of was too good for the representative of "the chief," who was toasted time and again. The ball at the big hotel was beautiful, and when the command returned to New Orleans on the following day it marched up Camp Street to head-quarters and gave the general a parting salute. Everything had gone off delightfully. Every item of the loaned tents and equipage was scrupulously returned, and the *entente cordiale* between the department commander and the Louisiana Artillery was firmly established.

But this was a matter that gave umbrage to the "radical" element of the political party in power. "What were these men," asked the newspaper devoted to the interests of the Warmouth government, "but rebels or would-be rebels,—relics of the Washington Artillery of war days?" All this was possibly true, but the war was over by several years, and they bore and saluted the stars and stripes and named their camp for a Union general. It was none of Mr. X.'s business, anyhow. He was ordered to go, and he found them mighty nice fellows. Now for the sequel. One night, long afterwards, when the general was living far down-town at the St. Louis Hotel, and Mr. X. had cozy quarters far up-town on Coliseum Place, there arose a new political entanglement; and this time there was the devil to pay, for the mob knocked the Jackson Square police station into flinders, and there was bloodshed and rioting in good earnest; and orders from Washington caused the appearance of the troops in town in strong force, even to the occupation by them of the state-house; and Mr. X. had no end of dispatch-writing at the office and far more welcome saddle-work in trotting to and fro conducting troops hither and yon, and getting into some business-like situations with the rioters. That was all legitimate duty, and he found no atom of objection, though it *was* a little comical at times to meet every now and then some of his camp friends among the

mobs that so readily dispersed at the intimation "United States troops coming." By this time the State had organized its police force as infantry, cavalry, and artillery, and had even a gunboat on the river; but it could not have held its own against the people had not the general government taken a hand. However, things had subsided: the mobs had disappeared, the troops gone back to Baton Rouge and the barracks, and no "military intervention" was to be tolerated again, when one evening, strolling with friends on Canal Street, Mr. X. was surprised by the sight of an armed battalion moving silently along. Inquiry of a detective whom he knew put Mr. X. in possession of the startling tidings that the Louisiana Field Artillery had been ordered to surrender all their arms to the State, and that they had refused. Guards had been placed at their armory on Carondelet Street, but "the boys" had gotten wind of the thing, and in some incomprehensible way had slipped in and were now there in force, determined to "hold the fort." This was news. Being in civilian dress, Mr. X. decided to go up and take a look at the situation. Back of the massive city buildings which front on Lafayette Square there runs an alley-way, and between this alley-way and Carondelet Street was the big armory. The astute police had crossed their bayonets in front at the main entrance, but had given no heed to the alley, and here "the boys" had slipped in. When Mr. X. reached the neighborhood of the armory he found a dense crowd of the populace. Beyond them solid ranks of police-infantry in their State uniforms and with their Winchesters stretching from wall to wall across and completely blocking Carondelet Street. Strolling up the sidewalk until he came to these troops, Mr. X. was not even halted by the sentries thrown out in the rear; and the next thing, without a word from him, the officers motioned to the men to give way and let him through. One hundred yards farther up the street, facing him, were similar solid ranks. Between the two commands in the broad thoroughfare not a soul was stirring. Doors and blinds on both sides of the street were closed and darkened. Only from the sally-port of the white armory a broad glare of light shone across to the opposite wall. And, as nobody hindered, thither went Mr. X. Beyond the light some police sprang suddenly forward, as though to warn him back, but an authoritative voice recalled them, and he could hear mention of the general's name. The next moment Mr. X. found himself looking into the muzzles of a big bronze field-piece and several rifles as he turned into the sally-port, but down went the small-arms as his camp friends recognized him; he was conducted up-stairs, where everything was arranged to repel attack, but where the officers came smilingly forward to ask had he come to demand their surrender. "If the general will send a mere corporal, we'll surrender at once, but this order comes from the lieutenant-governor of the State in the absence of his superior, and we will not give up to him." This was the sentiment of

the whole command, and that the police would have had a lively time enforcing the demand was evident at once. Explaining that he had simply dropped in out of curiosity and to note the situation in case the general should want to know about it, Mr. X. presently left. He carefully abstained from expressing any opinion as to the merits of the case, or giving any advice whatsoever, but, having got all the knowledge he could, he went back the way he came; and then some of the officers of the police battalion asked an eager question or two. It was not for *their* information he had made a *reconnaissance* which would have been forbidden them, and he laughingly declined saying anything about the condition of affairs, but strolled around awhile to see how they were posted and to await developments. After an hour he ventured to ask a new arrival if an attack were probable. "Attack! Lord, no!" was the answer. "That building's chuck full of fighting men, and we'd get shot down like sheep. Not much! We're just going to hold this street until orders come from Washington for *you* fellows to go in. That's what the governor's after to-night."

So Mr. X. wended his way up to head-quarters. The general had been there and gone earlier in the evening, said the janitor; everything was quiet. Mr. X. decided to go home and go to bed. He couldn't have been asleep an hour when there came a bounding step on the veranda, and then rat-tat-tat! at the blinds.

"What's up?" demanded Mr. X.

"The general wants you at once, sir."

Quickly as possible Mr. X. jumped into uniform, always hanging ready, took his sabre and gauntlets, sprang into the cab standing ready for him, rattled through the deserted streets wondering what might be going on, and in twenty minutes was in the general's room at the hotel, finding him tramping up and down in his night-gown and a fume of wrath and excitement. Sitting in the corner, with the same owl-like expression of preternatural gravity, was the inevitable politico-military adviser, and the instant X. caught sight of his face he knew what was up with the chief. The same old story: Mr. X. had "ruined him" again.

"My God, sir! *My* God, sir! What's this I hear? *Who* authorized you to go to those artillery men and tell 'em to stick to their guns and I'd see 'em through?"

"Nobody, sir."

"Then how in God's name did you come to do it, sir?"

"I didn't, sir, or anything like it."

"But I've just got a long message from Governor Pinchbeck to *say* that you did."

"The governor l—knows nothing about it, sir."

"Then how does it happen you're here in uniform?"

"The last time you sent for me at dead of night you wanted to

know why I *wasn't* in uniform. When your orderly roused me I presumed, of course, it meant duty, and dressed as quick as I could."

"You mean you've been home and to bed?"

"Certainly, sir."

Then the blessed old gentleman turned to and blasphemed the Fates that had thrown him in contact with such a gang of Munchausens as the political ring of that day. In ten seconds he had totally forgotten his wrath at X. and thundered his invectives at the others. In ten minutes he had directed X. to go to the armory and stay there, and represent him again, and keep the peace until they should hear from Washington, and at four in the morning the orders came. Not to Pinchbeck, but to the United States, the Field Artillery gave up their arms, and that episode was over.

But troublous times were on us again. It wasn't long before, for the third time, Mr. X. "ruined" his irascible old chief. This was a comicality. It was right in the midst of this same *emeute* and late one night, long after everybody had gone to bed, that Mr. X., who, having been in saddle much of the day, longed to go likewise, came in to headquarters about one o'clock, and was surprised to find the general at his desk. A room had been fitted up for him next his office, and there he spent his nights during the rows of the winter of '72–'73. Eagerly he looked up to receive the aide's report of his latest mission, and then said,—

"I waked up just a while ago—an idea struck me—most important—and I've been trying to find my pen. Just sit down here, will you, X.? I want to clinch it *now*."

Not until after 4 A.M. were the fair copies of that long confidential dispatch finished to his entire satisfaction. It was to Washington,—a *résumé* of the situation,—and when at last signed and finished his comfort and satisfaction knew no bounds.

"There, X.!" he said. "There! That thing has been hanging over me for three days. Now it's done—beautifully done. That last is admirable. Now. Not a word of it to a soul. This is confidential. I'll tend to mailing it in the morning." (Copies were already made,—by Mr. X., of course,—and all were in one package in the general's hands.) "Now, where can I put this, meantime? Here! The very thing. Here's the private drawer of my desk. There! Now it's securely locked, and I've got the key. Now—how tired you must be! Go home, my young friend. Go home and get a good night's rest! God bless my soul, but it's after four o'clock! Go home and sleep till noon if you can—you deserve it. I'll make some one else do your work. Good-night, X., good-night. Remember, though,—not a word of this is to be breathed to a soul. Good-night, and pleasant dreams."

Gladly enough went X. to his roost. It was after broad daylight when, having seen his horse cared for, he reached his up-town lodgings

and got to bed. It could not have been a moment later than 9.30 when he was aroused by thundering knocks and the voice of the general's special messenger. "Needed at once at head-quarters!" X. was half into his uniform when it occurred to him to ask where the row was this time; and the messenger replied that there wasn't any *outside of the office.*. The significance of *that* reply brought about speedy change to "cits," and in due time the A.D.C. reached the scene. Clerks were flying to and fro. The adjutant-general, the other two aides, the commanding officer from the barracks, and two of his staff all looked upon the arriving subaltern with eyes in which gloom and pity and the same old "Oh,-I-wouldn't-be-in-your-place" expression were intermingled. Every drawer in X.'s desk was turned topsy-turvy, and over and above all could be heard the objurgations of the chief. In an instant he was in the room, and the crowd silently listened and looked on.

"My God, sir! *My* God, sir! What have you done with that report, sir—that most important dispatch I—we wrote last night—this morning?"

"Nothing, sir. I haven't laid eyes on it since I left you at half-past four."

"Good God! Gentlemen, you—you hear him—and—and I intrusted that to his keeping."

"Why, no you didn't, general. You locked it up in your private drawer, and I'll bet it's there yet."

A dazed look on the old soldier's face. A light slowly breaking. A fumbling for the keys, a rapid clutch at the drawer, and out it comes, packet and all, just as he had left it. *Tableau!*

Then we all sat down and laughed, and the general told his story. He had gone to sleep after the letters were finished, but couldn't get them off his mind. He dreamed that they were in X.'s possession, and when he waked, and the officers began to come in, the old anxiety to consult with them took possession of him, and neither X. nor the letters appeared. We had champagne with the general that afternoon, but meantime the precious documents were read to one or two of the gang, and poor X.'s night-work went for nothing. It all had to be done over again.

Funniest of all was the night a prominent State official either *was* shot at or fancied he was, and fled for protection to head-quarters. There was intense excitement at the office by the time Mr. X. got there in obedience to impetuous summons, and he found the room thronged with sympathetic political friends and "heelers," and the general striving to get the report of the matter into shape for immediate transmission to Washington. The moment Mr. X. arrived he exclaimed, "Now, my dear sir, here's our man. Just give your pages to him." And in another moment Mr. X. found himself (locked in by the

politico-military supply department official aforementioned where no reporters could get at him) hastily occupied in writing from six or eight letter pages of somewhat shaky memoranda a dispatch for the signature of the shot-at party. Every now and then "the arch conspirator" would pop in to make suggestions as to changes, etc., until finally X. looked up and asked, "See here. Was it you or the other fellow who was shot at? and who's writing this dispatch, you or he?" And then in course of an hour the thing was finished in Mr. X.'s by this time well-known hand, and the signature of the eminent victim of a "close call" duly affixed. Then X. was sent to the telegraph office with it so as to see it off without any newspaper man's getting hold of it. At midnight the chief went home to bed, leaving Mr. X. at head-quarters as body-guard for the alarmed civilian.

But within the next twenty-four hours something occurred which aroused the wrath of the chief to boiling-point, and against the very man whom he had been protecting,—some piece of political trickery. More reports and dispatches were necessary. The general was excitingly dictating. X. was about half through a long report when an idea suddenly occurred to the old soldier:

"My God, sir! Stop! What am I thinking of? Why, it would ruin me, sir,—*ruin* me at Washington,—if a dispatch were to come there with my signature, but written by the same hand that wrote that mendacious report that—that—blank, blank, blank fellow signed. Tear it up, sir. Tear it up, and send me another amanuensis."

X. was "mad" this time, and chose to get foolishly huffy about the thing instead of laughing the sorely-badgered old gentleman out of the idea of its being of any earthly consequence what hand penned the copy for the Western Union office. He took the general at his word and left the office in a pet. And next morning, as he was sitting at his desk, the adjutant-general came in and said, "For goodness' sake go in there and see if you can't help out. The general's all tangled up in a dispatch, and he has S—— in there as amanuensis." So X. went, and sure enough, there were pages of blots and interlineations and scratches that the general himself had made and then couldn't decipher. He was tramping up and down in mingled wrath and desperation. He turned on the A.D.C. as the latter entered and pointed reproachfully at the littered desk. "My God, X.! When I asked you to take this position on my staff, it was to do all this work for me. Yes, sir,—and—and you've *never been of the slightest use to me!*"

Well! That was a stinger. X. went out, and in the course of the morning piled up a stack of letter-books as high as the desk filled with the imprints of his handwriting, and was going to lay his resignation on top of the whole thing, when in came the general; and who that ever knew the warmth of the heart that beat under that sometimes rough exterior, or the winning, lovable smile that broke over his

face at such moments, like sunshine after storm, could ever long afford to harbor rancor at "the chief." We had shaken hands over the rupture and laughed at its absurdities—on both sides—before the clocks were chiming noon. But for the politicians there would have been few trials for staff-officers where he was in command; but there were times when they managed to make it more than lively for "X."

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING,
U. S. A.

SERVICE SALAD.

Readers of "The United Service" are cordially invited to contribute to this department items of either fact or fancy, grave or gay, instructive or only entertaining; in short, any literary flotsam and jetsam likely to interest our subscribers.

Heart-Broken.

THE midshipmen of the French frigate "Calypso," commanded by Captain Lalande, and those of the English frigate "Blonde," commanded by Captain Dundas, had become, in 1831, inseparable companions. The Englishmen taught us fox-hunting; we taught them the rights of man, and got them to sing the "Marseillaise." They had, at first, some difficulty in understanding that the son of the Duke of Northumberland must be regarded as the equal, and no more, of the son of a shoemaker. At last, however, they gave in. It was just after the revolution of July, and we were carried away by our ardor for proselytizing. He who has not seen the French on the morrow of a revolution, does not know them. I have, at such a time, met grave men who were scarcely more serious than midshipmen.

Among our new comrades, it was impossible not to single out John Gore. It will be remembered that the statue raised to the conqueror of Waterloo has represented him as Achilles. The idea, however, is not a happy one. Nothing reminds one less of Achilles than the Duke of Wellington. The true English Achilles was my friend Gore,—active, fearless, skillful in all manly exercises, including boxing. When Gore plunged into the sea from the top of the forecastle of the "Blonde," he rose easily to the surface, cleaving the water with his shoulders, breast foremost, and body half-erect like a Triton.

The "Calypso" might justly have been called the paradise of midshipmen. I left it to join the "Actéon," a vessel where the discipline was stricter. It was a time of penance after a most gay and joyous life. We were lingering in front of Rhodes, in the vast bay of Marmorice, when a frigate belonging to his Britannic Majesty unexpectedly came to anchor close by. Scarcely had the anchor dropped, when a boat left the frigate. My friend Gore was again with me. To regale him I had only a case of Cypress wine with which I had promised myself I would do homage to my family. I sacrificed it without remorse. The evening passed like a dream; a single cloud only was likely to have spoiled its serenity. I maintained that the English language was uncouth and completely devoid of harmony. "It is uncouth for you who do not know how to pronounce it," replied the islander, with some warmth. "Have you ever heard anything more melodious than this strophe from *Lara?*

"'It was the night—and Lara's glassy stream
The stars are studding, each with imaged beam.'"

I did not argue further. The strophe, in fact, seemed to me agreeable, and it was being recited by a friend from whom I was to be separated in a few short minutes!

We parted, perhaps, forever. Such was the inward feeling which, in spite of ourselves, saddened our farewells, though neither of us had the courage to avow it. Gore started for the Indies; I remained in the Mediterranean. Three years later, he was returning to England with the rank of lieutenant. His father, Admiral Gore, was taking him home in his own vessel, happy and proud in having such a son. The vessel was proceeding round the Cape of Good Hope, when a squall came on, and a sailor fell from the main-topsail into the sea. John Gore, at one bound, was on the netting. For an instant he hesitated. The sailor

THE TRIALS OF STAFF-OFFICERS.

TWO YEARS OF COLLEGE DUTY.

It so happened that during the summer of 1880, while Mr. X. was attending a big reunion of war veterans in his old State, he was approached by an officer prominent on the staff of the governor and asked how he would like to be "Military Professor" at the State University, "beautifully located in the heart of the picturesque lake region in the centre of the commonwealth." Mr. X. had nothing in the world to do; he had attained the rank of captain of cavalry during the previous year, and been subsequently placed on the retired list. He had by this time a sizable and growing family to support, and was profoundly conscious of the fact that there was no trade or profession outside of soldiering for which he had the faintest qualification. He had naturally drifted back to the city that had been his home before the war days; but everything was changed. The university battalion came in to take part in the parade, and a very lively set of young fellows they seemed to be. There would be employment at least and a warm welcome from a large body of cultured and scientific men,—the Faculty,—said Mr. X.'s staff acquaintance. "Your father was prominent as a regent of the university from its earliest days until the war broke out," further said the gentleman. "He was warmly interested in it, and you are just the man they want. They are looking for an officer now."

It so happened that Mr. X. was much interested in the National Guard movement just starting in the West, as an improvement on the old militia business, and he had a chat with the adjutant-general of the State on the subject, and that officer urged him to come out to the capital and look over the ground. X. frankly explained that he could not think of it except as a possibly paying employment, and as Congress had before it a bill providing that retired officers might be, on their own application, assigned to such duties at certain colleges or universities, "provided that said college should pay to such officers the difference between their full and retired pay," Mr. X. proposed that if the regents of the university of his own State would agree to give him that stipend, he would move his family thither and be ready for work when the 'Varsity opened in September. The reply was that the re-

gents would not meet again until January, and nobody had power to promise any salaries for them, but that the executive committee was at the capital. Couldn't Mr. X. come and see them?

It was a blazing July day when, responding to this invitation, Mr. X. appeared upon the scene, was met by the adjutant-general, and escorted by him to the residence of the president. "You will find him a singularly dry, undemonstrative sort of person," said Mentor, "but under the surface there is a good deal that the students are much attracted by. I confess *I* don't know him at all." The president proved as dry as he was described.

"I presume you've come to see about the drills," was his salutation after the ceremony of introduction. "The regents have not said anything to me of late upon the subject, but I understand they are looking for somebody. What I consider especially desirable is that we should have some one who will get along without any friction between himself and the students, and one who can effect their being enrolled among the militia of the State." Here was unlooked-for spirit. Mr. X. had been given to understand that the president was a man who believed only in the *suaviter in modo* in dealing with mankind, who held decidedly Quakerish views as to arms and armies, and who had hitherto looked upon the military department of the university only as a necessary evil; and yet here he was, advocating the enrollment of the students in the organized militia. Mr. X. brightened up at once, and said he was pleased to hear it from the president.

"Yes," remarked that gentleman, "the militia get five dollars apiece to help buy their uniforms and three hundred dollars if they have an armory. Now our students have been required to buy a flannel blouse and cap, and many of them object. They wouldn't mind it so much if the State paid."

Mr. X. saw a grim smile about the bearded lips of the adjutant-general,—a war-time soldier of tried mettle,—and ventured to suggest to the president that he had read the laws of the State and knew that there were important duties and obligations required of the militia of which he was possibly unaware; but the president held up a thin white hand and gazed stonily in front of him as though he had no time for more than one side of the case.

"I do not know anything about *that*," said he. "What I want is that the students should get this money, and that the drills should be conducted without friction." And here the reverend gentlemen picked up a pen and looked distressingly anxious to resume his work at some manuscript. The adjutant-general and Mr. X. thereupon took the hint and their leave, the president vouchsafing an abstracted "good-afternoon," and unbending no more than a graven image from one end to the other of the brief interview.

"Don't mind his peculiarities," said Mentor. "He is deep in some

work on psychology just now, and hates to be disturbed. You'll find the regent more cheery."

We did. The next visit was to the chairman of the executive committee, and if "Prex" had appeared the quintessence of austerity and coldness, the regent fairly glowed with greeting and cordiality. He was delighted to see Mr. X.; rejoiced to know the university had the opportunity of extending a welcome to him; congratulated the institution on such an acquisition to its fine Faculty, and the "acquisition" on such accomplished friends and associates as he would find among them. "And then our city, sir, our lovely home, and our people,—cultured, intelligent, highly educated, and refined. You can find nothing better in the whole country, sir. It's a capital move you're making, capital!"

But Mr. X. explained that he hadn't quite made that move. There were pecuniary considerations. He had a family, no means, and small pay. He would have to move them hither and board, as he could not furnish a home yet. And what had the chairman to say about the six hundred dollars a year, the difference between the full and retired pay of a captain of cavalry? The chairman was large-hearted, beaming, most encouraging. It was something, of course, he could not offer or pay himself, but the board met in January, said he, and then it could all be readily settled. "There would be no trouble about it whatever," were the words Mr. X. understood him to say; and the moment "Mentor" and he had quitted the building the former turned to him and said, "Well, that matter looks most favorable."

Then we consulted the books. The university had eagerly, it seems, availed itself of the privilege accorded it by the Agricultural College Act, passed by Congress during the war, making large grants of public lands to such colleges as should offer an agricultural course to its students, *provided the college would also prescribe for its students "instruction in military tactics and discipline."* By reference to the treasurer's report it was found that one-fifth the total income of the university was derived from this agricultural-college grant; that the total number of pupils taking the agricultural course was *two;* and, as the rules of the 'Varsity provided that all able-bodied male students of the freshman and sophomore classes must "attend drill," the number in the "military department" was presumably over one hundred and fifty. A young gentleman just out of Cornell had been made Professor of Agriculture, and was about to conduct his two pupils through the mazes of bucolical lore to a knowledge of scientific farming. He was to have *his* salary from the fund. Surely, argued X.'s advisers, the regents will be glad to pay so small a sum to a professor with so big a department. Two more regents did Mr. X. call upon and approach upon the subject. They were profoundly civil, but noncommittal. All agreed that at the June meeting the executive com-

mittee had been instructed by the board to endeavor to secure the services of a retired officer of the army as "Professor of Military Science and Tactics," but no one of them saw fit to mention to the party most interested, even when the subject of terms was being discussed, that a very important proviso was attached,—to wit, that such officer was to be entitled to no compensation whatever from the university. Probably the committee was ashamed of its colleagues. Certainly Mr. X. would never have accepted the position on any such terms had he known of their existence; but never until nearly a year afterwards did he discover the truth; and in the mean time, in September, 1880, he moved his household to the capital city, within easy range of the 'Varsity, and began his duties. Meantime, two Western colleges had offered him a similar position with a definite salary; but he had seen fit to trust his fortunes to his own State.

It would seem, on looking over the archives, that when first starting its military department the regents had in good faith accepted the conditions of Congress; absorbed the two hundred and forty thousand odd acres of lands, and, out of the proceeds of certain sales, fitted up a combined gymnasium and drill-hall of inexpensive pattern; employed an officer of the regular service; required all students to attend drills, parades, etc., and provide themselves with a handsome uniform. The State, to help out, generously donated such arms and equipments "of obsolete pattern" or other qualification that rendered them worthless, and things began with a good deal of style. It was a new toy, and "the boys" took to it. By and by the drills waxed monotonous and "the boys" tired; then "the professor" grew aweary, and it would appear that after a while the military enthusiasm began to languish. But that fifteen thousand dollars a year of income from the agricultural fund was useful in paying salaries and maintaining other departments better patronized by students and less favored of Congress. To earn it, the 'Varsity stood pledged to keep up instruction in tactics etc., and now needed a professor. The army was being reduced and reorganized, and the vexed problem was solved. A West-Pointer who had served through the war in the regular infantry and had a bent for engineering and mathematics was induced to quit the service and come to this Western Athens as "Professor of Engineering and Military Science and Tactics." Little by little as he grew older he devoted more time to engineering and less to tactics, but they were rubbing along to suit the regents and the Faculty, and there were no "meddling old clams" of United States inspectors going the rounds in those days to see if the government was getting the worth of its money out of these institutions. Then, when Congress authorized the details of active and efficient officers and fire-arms and equipments to just such institutions, what did the regents magnanimously do but waive the claims of this, the leading university of the State, and turn over these perquisites—not

without some political or other consideration one may be well assured—to a struggling institution up among the hills of our western border. Military drills, duties, and discipline gradually fell into that "innocuous desuetude" of which so much has been heard. Little by little the consciences of the regents and Faculty had been lulled to sleep. They pocketed the fifteen thousand dollars a year without ado and disbursed it for the benefit of any other department; but the purpose for which it was bestowed by the general government was gradually forgotten. The Professor went the way of all flesh, and a successor was found on whom was conferred the honor of stepping into the chair which bore the most portentous title in all the university,—"Professor of Civil and Mechanical Engineering and of Military Science and Tactics."

That the new incumbent was profoundly versed in all that the name of engineering implied was evident from the start, and in more than a decade of valuable service has never been questioned. That he was entirely innocent of martial experiences and ignorant of military science he promptly protested, but was as promptly told it made no particular difference so long as the name of the thing was kept up. Seeing the utter unpopularity of "the drills" both with the Faculty and the students, his predecessor had gradually let the matter drift into a perfunctory performance of company or skirmish evolutions for the "sophs" and squad drills for the freshmen during the spring term. The uniforms were old blouses handed down like the sins of our fathers from generation to generation, and they, with the concomitant forage-caps, slid down a descending scale of prices and shabbiness until half a dollar would buy, but a dollar could not repair, the best of them. The new professor had a conscience, unluckily for him, and so felt bound to burden himself with the study of tactics and the instruction of the raw material that fell into his hands. He had a friend and adviser in the captain of an admirable company of militiamen in town, and between them they worked up a revival and actually had a few battalion drills. In his one year of duty the new professor had picked the department out of a slough of despond, but plainly saw that he could not keep it out and attend to other duties. And so it was that he went to the regents and asked for prompt relief, and so it happened that those amiable financiers authorized their executive committee to secure the services of a retired officer of the army, provided it cost them nothing. That the retired officer might have to support a family and himself while thus devoting his time and brains to their service was a matter which in the plenitude of their wisdom the regents considered unworthy their consideration: that was *his* lookout, not theirs. That in bestowing upon them so munificent a gift for the maintenance of an agricultural department and instruction in military science and tactics the government of the United States expected a portion, at least, of the sum to be

devoted to those purposes was another matter, which, while it might have appealed to them individually, did not occur to the regents as a body. What they wanted was somebody who would come there and do the work or keep up an appearance thereof, and make them a present of it. But, as said before, this was something Mr. X. never found out until long after. He went there, however, "to do the work," and he meant business from the start.

On arriving a day or so before the university term began, Mr. X. met the president, and after introducing himself, for he found that the absorbed old gentleman could not "place him" at all, he asked if he could see the arms, armories, etc., and was told he could, if Patrick was anywhere about. Mindful of his own college days and the importance of the deputy janitor, Mr. X. wandered around through the beautiful grounds and gazed out over the lovely view of dancing waters and wooded points; admired the location of the observatory, and marveled at the ugliness of the north and south "dormitories," but found no Patrick. There was the old wooden gymnasium, however, and a couple of Hibernians were patching up the roadway and smoking dhudeens in placid converse the while. Seeing the irresolution in the stranger's appearance as he looked around him, one of them hailed with a friendly,—

"Are ye wan of the new byes?" And Mr. X. was thereby made aware of the fact that all who enter here were not necessarily in their teens.

"I'm a new one," answered X., "and looking for Patrick, the janitor. Do you know him?"

"What d'ye want of him?" was the indirect response.

"To look at the gymnasium."

"Can't ye look at it with yer own eyes? Shure, there it is in front of ye. Ye won't want to see it so much a month from now, young feller. Shure, they've got a new prof. He b'longs to the regulars, bedad, and he'll dhrill the skins off your backs."

This was a fine reputation to start with, thought Mr. X. Then a tall, heavily-built young man, with an adolescent beard and ponderous gravity of mien, arose from under the trees and, putting down the book he was reading, looked curiously at the stranger. Presently he came forward.

"Did you say you were a new-comer? What course are you going to take?" he asked, and looked down at Mr. X.'s eye-glasses and thin face with benevolent interest.

Mr. X. explained that he believed he would take the military department, and asked the young man if he knew how to get into the gymnasium, at the same time giving his name.

"Oh! You're the new prof.?" said that young gentleman, ingenuously, and with a pleasant smile. "Somebody told me you were a

captain in the regular army, but"—and he looked doubtingly down at the "five foot six" of stature and smooth-shaven chin of the newcomer—"I s'pose he didn't know. I'm Mr. ——; I was one of the officers last year; but I s'pose you'll make new ones."

Mr. X. "fell in" with the situation and smilingly replied that he had given that matter no thought as yet. He would have to see and know more about the students.

"Well, I'll tell you, Cap.,—or Professor,—which is it? (Mr. X. endeavored to signify it was of no consequence; perhaps "Cap." would do best—for the present)—"you'll find our boys a first-rate set, and they'll treat you mighty well if you get started right. Only you mustn't be severe with them. Go easy, you know," and, to show the kindly and cordial spirit of Mr. X.'s future pupils, the young man begged him to sit down in the shade a few moments, and he would go and find Patrick. In ten minutes he returned, panting, having been away over to some distant fields, but he returned triumphant, bearer of the keys.

The gymnasium proved to be a dusty old barn in which some ropes, rings, dumb-bells, clubs, etc., were kicking about, and in a room that opened from it were over a hundred old calibre 50 breech-loaders, the heaviest known American make, being altered from the muzzle-loading Springfield of war days, calibre 58. There was an equal number of the old war-time cartridge-boxes, with brass "U. S." plate, and leather, brass-tipped bayonet-scabbards and waist-belts, all shabby and dirty. So were the forage-caps and blouses that were strewn about the room; and this was the equipment of the University Battalion.

Ten minutes after, still accompanied by his student guide, Mr. X. appeared in front of the main building, where some two or three young men were gathered about a gentleman who was adjusting a theodolite.

"That's Professor C——," said the student. "He had us last year. Come up and I'll introduce you." And, thanking him, Mr. X. was presented to the young professor, who greeted him with great courtesy; told him how glad he was to turn over a troublesome department to his hands; diffidently begged Mr. X. not to be "severe" with the boys, as they hadn't been accustomed to it, and cordially asked him to come around that evening and play whist. A friendship began right there that Mr. X. has valued ever since; he found in Professor C—— a young man of tireless energy and a loyal supporter in the troublous times that came. First impressions were strong, and Mr. X. was congratulating himself on the general run of the Faculty if they were at all like Professor C——.

Oddly enough, however, week after week, month after month, went by, and, though he passed them daily on the "campus" and met them constantly in the streets and about the buildings, "Prex" and Professor C—— continued to be the only ones of that accomplished and highly-

cultured Faculty who "would be so delighted to welcome him" with whom Mr. X. had so much as a bowing acquaintance. The new agricultural professor and Mr. X. had secured quarters under the same roof. The former was a bachelor, the latter a benedict. Some of the ladies of the city speedily called on Mrs. X., and some old friends of his father did the kind and civil to the son; but calling on a new addition to the Faculty was apparently not one of the tenets of the 'Varsity. Mr. X. incidentally met some few civilians who were interested in the institution, but they contented themselves with admonitions to him not to be "severe" with the boys, and presently it began to dawn upon him that the community was inspired with the idea that a young regular was a near kin to one of grim old Fritz's cane-brandishing drill-sergeants,—a something to be dreaded in a peace-loving community,—and this was before he had conducted a single drill.

It was an eventful morning, that of the assembly of the battalion. "Prex" had demurred somewhat at the idea of beginning drills that fall. He thought one drill a day in the spring term ought to be enough, but had no great objections to Mr. X.'s beginning now, provided it didn't interfere with other work. Recitations began at nine, and at the first general gathering of the students in the great hall the president warned the sophomores and freshmen to present themselves at the gymnasium every morning, Saturdays and Sundays excepted, at eight o'clock. It was about two weeks after his arrival that Mr. X. and his pupils came together in full force. Some thirty sophomores in their flannel blouses fell in under the direction of their officers of the previous year, and there were left about two hundred young fellows,—some swinging on the trapeze bars, some perched up in the windows, others lolling about the four sides of the old barn, and about a score of them squatted on a long horizontal ladder that ran the length of the building at such a height that the pendent feet of these "roosters" would easily brush off the caps of tall men passing underneath. Then the freshmen class was ordered to form line, and, having provided himself with a list of their names so far as the president could effect it, Mr. X. began to look them over. There were perhaps fifty-five who obeyed the order, and a bright, keen, intelligent set of young Westerners they were. Mr. X. had seen no less than nine "plebe" classes report at West Point, and their general average was, so far as appearance was concerned, considerably below what he now saw in the valley of the Mississippi. Setting two sophomore officers at work taking down the names, Mr. X. turned around to see who these other visitors might be. There were still over a hundred interested lookers on who didn't appear to belong to either class and who were taking in the situation with an alert and good-natured criticism, which speedily verged on the humorous, and became more and more audible. Mr. X. in no wise interfered. He wanted to study the students a while, and so, leaving the

freshmen to their orderly officers, he drew his sword and, calling "Company A" to attention, proceeded to see what they knew about the manual of arms. It wasn't half bad; but the slouchy carriage, the unkempt and shabby appearance of many of the young men in those venerable and baggy blouses; the way in which heads and eyes went turning about; the grins and salutations exchanged with spectators along the wall, were all matters that he knew would have to be tackled at the start. There was no room for marching, and after brief exercise in the manual and the discovery that they had never had the firings, Mr. X. bade them put away their muskets and come out and teach these freshmen their facings. Then the fun began and the lookers on took a hand. "Chaff," counsel, and criticism were showered in equal proportion. No instruction worth speaking of was imparted. No one of the "sophs" had more than the vaguest idea how to drill a squad, and it was all Babel and confusion when Mr. X. at 8.40 shouted an order to cease drills and reform their lines as before. There was speedily order among the military students and silence among the others, and then Mr. X. made the first speech of his life. What he first said to his pupils need not be recorded. What he then said to the equal number of spectators was to thank them courteously for their presence; to assure them that the lively interest they had taken in the initial drill could not but be gratifying to him and to the members of the battalion; that he was heartily glad they had taken this opportunity to visit the armory and see the command before it got settled down to business, and that he looked forward with pleasure to the next occasion on which they could have an opportunity of criticising the drill of their fellow-students, which would be some date in the year following, when an invitation would be sent to them, and until which date they would kindly understand that during drill hours no one would be allowed in the building but *bonâ fide* members of the battalion. "And we will begin now," concluded Mr. X., as smilingly and pleasantly as he knew how, whereat the spectators, in evident surprise and with some reluctance, but finally without a word, slowly took themselves out of the open door-way, and the gentlemen on the long ladders came sliding down from their perches, and, amid the laughter and jeers of the men in ranks, the "gym" was cleared and closed, and Mr. X. was alone with his charges. It was easy to see that he had scored one point in their good graces. Then he had a square talk with them, and the next day work began in earnest: Regular drill, 8 to 9 A.M., compulsory to all; special drill, 4 to 5 P.M., for those who chose to take it, open alike to "sophs" and "fresh" and to be rudimentary in the last degree. That special squad never fell below thirty-eight all winter long until its discontinuance, and started with nearly sixty.

The first thing Mr. X. noted was the large number of lates and absentees in the morning. Men who appeared at the first two or three

drills disappeared entirely from his sight, yet were attending recitations. X. went to the president to inquire if he had excused them. It was part of his programme to appear always in strict uniform when on duty, and to "stand attention" to the president precisely as he would to the superintendent at West Point. X. wanted to teach his pupils a respectful and soldierly bearing, always exacted of them that they should so comport themselves towards him, and thoroughly believed in the force of example. But it seemed to puzzle the president. He plainly didn't know what to make of it. He was always writing at his desk when X. tapped at the door, and, obeying his summons to "Come," entered, and, after the salutation "Good-morning, Mr. President," proceeded to his business. "Prex" would listen in an abstracted way. He couldn't account for it that these young men should absent themselves; he had excused nobody. If a student got ten unexcused absences in so many months it severed his connection with the university. He "would inquire into it and send them to Mr. X. to account for themselves." Two or three days elapsed and they failed to come. X. again called upon the president to make inquiries. More students were slipping away, and he could see dozens of young fellows loafing about the grounds while drills were in progress, sometimes the very ones whom he had missed. It always took the president a moment or two to get back to earth and think of Mr. X.'s name, and then his usual question was,—

"Well, what did I say I'd do about it?"

"You said, sir, that you would inquire into it and have them sent to me to account for the matter."

"And they haven't come?"

"No, sir; and I have reason to believe some of them are deliberate in their absence. It is demoralizing to the rest of my pupils to find that several of their number can stay away day after day unpunished."

"Well, possibly I forgot to speak of it. Who did you say they were?"

And X. would patiently produce his list, and the president jot them down. Then,—

"What you ought to do—a—Mr.—Mr.—X., is to talk to these young men beforehand; make them understand the justice of the regulation that they should all attend this drill, and the propriety of their being punctual and regular in their attendance. If a young man has clearly pointed out to him the rights of the case, why, then, it's his fault if he go wrong. If he doesn't understand the merits of the case, then it's our fault."

"I see," says Mr. X. "Now, may I be permitted a question, Mr. President?"

The president gravely bows.

"These young fellows are receiving here, free of all expense, an excellent education, which anywhere else would cost them several hundred dollars a year. The general government has largely contributed to these facilities, and as a return asks only one thing,—that the students should be taught military drill and discipline, so that in case of future war we may not be as destitute of drilled soldiers as we were in '61. Is this not the case?"

"I—a—possibly it is. I had not considered it in that light."

"I have so represented it to the students, sir, and early in the term. What would you have me add to that by way of pointing out the justice and propriety of their attendance on this duty?"

"Well, I presume that covers the ground. I will send these young men to you; and if they are absent again, just report them to the class officers."

Reporting to class officers, however summary and direful a penalty that appeared to be in scholastic eyes, only partially "filled the bill" as a measure of discipline. The Christmas holiday came and went. January and the meeting of the regents had arrived, and X. was determined on decisive measures. Up to this time all had gone swimmingly in the battalion. "The boys" had done capital work and were making fine progress. But with the Faculty Mr. X. was apparently as much "a cat in a strange garret" as he was at the start. One more acquaintance had he made, and that was all. The professor of the French language and his charming wife had called on Mrs. X., and the ladies were presently on terms of pleasant intimacy; but X. was morally certain that his efforts to establish and maintain discipline in his own department had few supporters in the Faculty at large, where for years "the drill" had been regarded solely as a necessary evil. It was evident, too, that the president looked upon the head of the department as some sort of a drill-sergeant, and not at all as a member of the Faculty. This august body met every Monday afternoon, and all professors and assistants there assembled and meted out punishments to delinquents and discussed the rights and wrongs of each of the twenty-odd departments of instruction; but, though his was the biggest in point of members attending at any one hour, Mr. X. was not bidden to the council, and there was no one to represent his views. On one or two occasions of social importance, too, where the president had bidden his associates to rally around him, Mr. X. was the only one left out. He did not attribute it to malice, but ignorance, and proposed to settle it his own way.

When the regents adjourned the president of the board met Mr. X. and hailed him as "Professor" with a hearty shake of the hand and words of high commendation on the great improvement in the drill and discipline of the students. "We established the Chair of Military Science and Tactics to-day, and unanimously elected you to fill it."

"And how about the salary?" asked the unappreciative Mr. X.

"Well, the board wouldn't listen to that. They think—several of them—that as the government compels us to keep up this instruction, it and not we should furnish the instructor."

And that is the way matters stood at the opening of the new year. It may be supposed that Mr. X. would quit in disgust, but he didn't. He had made up his mind the whole Faculty, from the president down, should be taught to respect that long-abused department, and he meant that sooner or later the board of regents should pay that money. The tussle began with the first meeting of the Faculty, when X. took his seat as "the new professor."

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING,
U.S.A.

(To be continued.)

would have a favorable impression on the mind of the person devising the national standard. The removal of the crosses from the blue field would obtain the design of the standard of the present day, without the stars; and, viewed through these transformations, the thought is strengthened, as suggested by Dr. Lossing, that the flag of the East India Company was the basis of the American national banner.

But, whatever might have been the genesis of the standard of the United States, the one fact remains,—that a Lancashire antiquary (according to good testimony) proposed the design for the armorial bearings of the American Republic, which are welcomed with proud distinction to a foremost place among the great national emblems of the world.

> "Ye Stars of States! forever shine,
> As up ye climb in lengthening line.
>
> * * * * *
>
> Wide o'er the sea and land afar
> Display undimmed each sparkling star,
> While Tropic palm and Arctic crag
> Reflect the splendors of the flag,
> America yet holds unfurled,
> The hope of man throughout the world!"

Little need is there to extend the subject. "The stars and stripes shall guarantee liberty forever;" so spake Wendell Phillips. For more than a century the "stars and stripes" have been symbolic of everything that is patriotic, humane, and progressive. May they so remain to the end of time!

THOMAS GIBBONS,
U.S.N.

THE TRIALS OF STAFF-OFFICERS.

TWO YEARS OF COLLEGE DUTY.

(Continued from page 440.)

However unsatisfactory might have been the result, chronicled in the April number, of the action of the board of regents on his claim, Mr. X. had "enlisted for the war," so to speak, and his pugnacity was aroused. As plainly as actions could put it the majority of the board and of the Faculty had given the officer to understand that for a long time past they had looked upon the "Department of Military Science and Tactics" only as a necessary evil,—something to be borne only because of the large slice of their income which they would doubtless have to forfeit if the general government became aware of the fact that the 'varsity was not living up to the conditions. One member of the board frankly said to Mr. X., "The government compels us to keep up the system of drill. We hold, therefore, that the government should bear all the expenses." And the president of the university fairly beamed with gratification when he unearthed and exhibited to Mr. X. an old catalogue in which appeared an extract from the laws passed by the Legislature, soon after the close of the Civil War, setting forth the magnanimous appropriation to the institution of such "obsolete" arms and equipments as might be lying around loose in the dust-bins at the capitol, and furthermore providing that every student "might" (not should) receive instruction in tactics. Mr. X.'s view of the case as an officer of the general government was that the university was in honor bound to require every able-bodied male student to be instructed in at least the school of the soldier, company and battalion; and up to January, 1881, after four months' work, he had not been able to convince the authorities that he was right. Now, however, he had been made a member of the Faculty, was entitled to appear at the meetings thereof every Monday afternoon, and, while he did not mean to be at all precipitate, the new professor fully intended that, before the opening term came to a close, his department should receive proper recognition. Oddly enough his first backing and support came from some of the members of the Faculty, and came in this wise:

The first thing that had attracted the attention of Mr. X., on his

arrival at the 'varsity in the previous September, was the decidedly free-and-easy style in which the undergraduates spoke of or to—and generally behaved towards—their professors and instructors. "The boys," as they were universally spoken of, practically owned the town as well as the institution itself, and in a most good-natured and patronizing manner comported themselves towards the community. Every boarding-house within a radius of two miles of the dome of the main building was conducted principally in their interest,—and most of the houses *were* boarding-houses. Everybody, by tacit consent, seemed to give way to the students, both in and out of the grounds. They traveled, as a rule, in squads of six or eight; bright-eyed, glowing-cheeked, athletic young fellows, full of high health and exuberant spirits, and as utterly free and uncontrolled as so many colts. Vigorous disciples were they of just such doctrines as were preached by Danton, Marat, and Desmoulins,—"Red" republicans to a boy, holding firmly to free speech, free press, free everything, and the entire equality of man. No reverence had they for anybody in authority. The governor and the State officers, the regents and the Faculty, were only so many respectable old Turveydrops or Dogberrys, hired by the sovereign people to guard the public money or give them—the people's actual representatives—such instruction as they saw fit to receive. The elective system prevailed at the 'varsity, not only in the matter of courses or studies pursued, but in matters of courtesy and daily intercourse with preceptors. Mr. X. observed with some little surprise that neither on the grounds nor on the streets of the town did the students, as a rule, raise or touch the hat to the Faculty. The young man might, and often did, so honor the head of the college and some favorite professor under whom he might be studying, but, except in rare cases, no recognition whatever was accorded the others; my young sovereign strolled past the bulk of the Faculty with hands in pockets and pipe in mouth, and there was no one to teach him any better.

Mr. X. at first supposed that the evident hostility to his department shown by many of the Faculty had infected the students, and that their passing him without recognition of any kind was due to this fact, but the observation of a day or two convinced him that he was not being discriminated against: the other professors were noticed no more than he was, except by those students who happened to be in their own classes, and not by any means was it the rule even then.

X. called upon the president on various matters and, among other things, notified him that he had observed this state of affairs and that, mindful of the presidential injunctions to try to explain to "the boys" the justice and propriety of every order he gave them, Mr. X. had pointed out to the battalion that courtesy, and a proper regard for the fact that the students were here the recipients of a free education from the State, should prompt them to tender a gentlemanly salute to every

member of the Faculty wheresoever he might meet him, and that the State officers and the regents, too, should be similarly recognized. When in uniform the members of the battalion were therefore directed to give the "officer's salute" similar to that tendered by the cadets at West Point, and when in civilian dress they were instructed to raise the hat. One or two students, true to the long-standing adherence to the views advocated by the honored parent of Mr. Midshipman Easy, had proceeded to "argue the point,"—one young gentleman falling out of ranks and inquiring, "Suppos'n' I haven't been introduced. Do you expect me to make a bow to a man I don't know?" and appearing to be greatly surprised when told that that was just what was expected. Mr. X. certainly expected the president to approve of his action in the matter, and was not a little perturbed when the good old gentleman laid down his pen and remarked,—

"I'm afraid you're going too fast. It is never safe to order what you cannot enforce, and therefore we've never required it here. When I want a student to recognize me on the street I take off my hat to him —don't you see?—and then he has to."

"From a Christian point of view," replied Mr. X., "that is undeniably effective, but I have always been taught that the junior should invariably offer the first salutation to the senior, the inferior to the superior, the pupil to the teacher——"

"That's all very well at West Point or in a military despotism," replied "Prex," "but you must remember this is a civil institution."

"I do, sir, and would like to see the students as civil as the institution. As to the custom I speak of, I was taught it long before I went to West Point,—taught it at a college that had been in successful and useful existence a hundred years before this one was dreamed of. More than that, Mr. President, it was the first lesson I learned at that college, and the whole freshman class with me learned it in the chapel from the lips of our president before we attended a single recitation."

Still the head of the 'varsity was unconvinced; but Mr. X. decided to go it alone. Of the one hundred and fifty students who ought to be attending the military instruction, over ninety were daily on hand, and of this ninety all but a dozen seemed interested in the work and at least forty were enthusiasts. Those forty were the leaven that should leaven the whole lump. They accepted Mr. X.'s admonition with cordial spirit. The whole battalion presently fell into "swing;" the professors were at first astonished and in some cases embarrassed by being respectfully saluted by the nattily-uniformed students as they took their evening stroll down to the post-office and back; then they began to look for and appreciate it. The State officers, too, speedily noted the change. The next governor—an old war-horse—stopped Mr. X. in the capitol park one day, soon after his inauguration.

"Captain," said he, "for many a year I've been accustomed when

in this town to being hustled off the sidewalk or flattened up against the fence by these boys at the university, and now when I meet them they 'break sections' and salute like soldiers and gentlemen, and I want to tell you, sir, how an old soldier appreciates the work you are doing. Those boys will soon see how much their own self-respect is increased by being taught these things, instead of being allowed to run wild as they have been. They are first-rate boys, and all they need is to be shown the way."

They *were* first-rate boys; full of fun and mischief, as boys were born to be, but, with no one to curb or guide them, pretty sure to be carried away through sheer exuberance of spirits at times. Just as the governor said, it used to be a regular thing for them to come charging down the north side of State Street twice a day, and there was no breaking their array. The sidewalk, where in repair, was just wide enough for four boys, shoulder to shoulder and with locked arms, and, after sessions, morning and afternoon, phalanx after phalanx of the laughing, devil-may-care crowds would plunge along that narrow path, and no man, woman, or child could make headway against them,—the wall or the gutter were the presented alternatives. Beginning with the battalion, Mr. X. speedily broke up that system by simply pointing out that it was ungentlemanly and boorish. The battalion quit it, and as the uniformed boys soon began to give the tone to university matters, the others dropped it. Only sophomores, freshmen, and "special students" were required to join the battalion, and some of the seniors and juniors, of course, did a good deal of harm by ridiculing the salute and chaffing the youngsters on their being required to "testify to their own subserviency and thraldom." Fortunately, however, the majority of these upper classmen were men of ability and character, proud of their university and quick to see how the whole mass of lower classmen was learning lessons of respect and courtesy to their superiors, and of manliness and self-respect in their bearing towards all men. There was something more than the manual of arms, then, in this daily grind in the gymnasium.

Then Mr. X. required his soldier students to "stand attention" in addressing him. They saw him do the same when he spoke to the president, and were told by him that while he could give them no orders on the subject, it was something they *should* do in speaking to all their instructors, and that they should carry what they learned in the squad drill to their section-rooms. Many of them did, and that was how it came about that before he had been in the Faculty a fortnight three professors who were on duty over the "sophs and fresh" took occasion to introduce themselves to Mr. X. and say to him that never before had they had such courteous and well-behaved classes as was now the case, the example being set by the young men who wore the uniform.

This was encouraging, but Mr. X. well knew he had a fight ahead, and presently the ball was opened by two professors who dealt mainly with the upper classes and the "special students." It all came about from the fact that the January catalogue convinced Mr. X. that his suspicions were correct. There were some forty students who had successfully evaded military duty all through the term. Armed with this list of names he arose in meeting and stated that justice to the young men who did attend drill day after day, as well as justice to the government, demanded that these shirkers should be required to report to him forthwith. Professor A—— was on his feet in a minute to protest in the name of three or four who were seeking for "honors" in his course. It was a shame to compel them to go to drill when they never would be soldiers in the world and didn't want to learn how.

Mr. X. replied that not a quarter of a century back the nation had called for soldiers from this State and this very institution, and found nothing but green, uninstructed men after the first rush of volunteers. The intention was to impart to all young men (who entered the colleges which had accepted the valuable land grants of the government) a knowledge of elementary tactics and military discipline. The language of the act was plain, and he would be recreant to his duty if he did not do his best to carry it out.

But Professor A—— was truculent and even high-tempered, and his response was in an angry tone, whereas Mr. X., who had expected just such a development, was scrupulously courteous in the debate and kept his temper in his boots. The president interposed and Professor A—— sat down only to be succeeded by Professor D——, who proceeded to take issue with Mr. X. as to the duty of the university in the case. He didn't at all believe that the government expected anything of the kind. He knew of two universities, both of which had accepted the grant and one of which had an officer detailed by the War Department, "and at neither of them did they ever have drills at all." This was simply blissful music to Mr. X.'s ears. He got the floor again (a very difficult matter, for it was a characteristic of the male members of this Faculty to talk all at once, to burst in on one another's remarks; and one of the professors—a brilliant man and a pillar of strength—rarely let go of a subject until he had exhausted all arguments on *both* sides), and, having got the floor, he thanked the professor with all the suavity of which he was master for this most valuable information. The War Department had long suspected that some colleges were not acting in good faith in the matter, and would be prompt to act, he doubted not, on receipt of evidence coming from so high a source. "Would the professor kindly name the institutions to which he referred?" and Mr. X. produced his note-book.

But this was "carrying the war into Africa." The professor found that he had only heard so with regard to one and conjectured so with

regard to the other, with which he had at one time been connected. During that time, it was true, they had no drills; but, finding their fund in danger, the authorities had applied for and got an army officer as instructor shortly after Professor D—— had severed his connection with them, and no sooner did the officer arrive than military instruction began and has been continued to this day.

Despite the vehement opposition of these two gentlemen and the apathy of others, Mr. X.'s point was carried and the forty recalcitrants were ordered to report for duty forthwith. There was rejoicing in "the gym." and no end of chaff and fun when, on the Wednesday morning following the meeting, these young men came sullenly to the commandant and were successively interrogated as to how and why they had failed to obey the president's instructions of the previous September.

One of them produced an old catalogue in which appeared a rule that members of the sophomore and freshmen classes *must* attend drill, and claimed that, being a "special student," he was exempt. "Special students" were those who were allowed to select each year any three studies they desired to pursue instead of going through the prescribed "curriculum" of the "Ancient Classical," the "Modern Classical," or the "Scientific" divisions of the regular classes. If this interpretation of the rules had been sustained by the Faculty, every student had it in his power, if he tired of the monotony or chafed under the discipline of the drills, to withdraw from the regular classes, select three studies, and call himself a "special." Many had done so during the fall term, but were now brought to time, and were remanded to the charge of half a dozen lively young sergeants and corporals for instruction in setting up, salutings, and facings. As they had been jeering at the uniformed students for two months past, you can imagine with what gusto those drills were conducted.

Of course, on many a specious plea, the "drafted" men sought to get out of it, and, one after another, professors and instructors came to Mr. X. to ask that he would make an exception in this case or that. Professor B—— wanted Mr. Smith excused from drills because he was studying hard for "honors" in Latin and the drill-hour broke in upon his work. Mr. X. asked if this was the only student striving for "honors" in Latin. No. There were more: two of them faithful soldiers in the battalion. Mr. X. promptly declined; he did not for a moment admit the justice of excusing one student from military duty that he might use the time in defeating competitors for "honors" who were serving their time in the ranks. Another instructor came to plead for Mr. Jones, who was to represent the "Athenians" in the coming oratorical contest with "Acropolitans," and practiced each day under professional supervision at this particular hour. Mr. X. thought that if the representatives of the other societies were to be excused for

a similar purpose for a day or two it might be arranged. This was early in January. "When does the contest come off?" he asked the professor. "Well—er—not until some time next spring; the date is not yet fixed, but they always begin their preparations months ahead," and X. was so bull-headed and hard-hearted that he said "No," and Mr. Jones, to the delight of six-score young soldiers, abandoned for the time being the daily practice—at that hour—of the gestures and attitudes of Demosthenes for the enforced rigidity of the position of the soldier.

Other professors interposed in favor of other students, but, so long as the young man was physically sound, Mr. X. declined to make exceptions. The professor and the student not infrequently flew to the president to have the decision reversed, but for the time being the head of the 'varsity had agreed to leave the decision of all such cases to the head of the battalion, and Mr. X. took the burden on his shoulders and said "No" to all such applications, and the decision stood. Presently, however, the boys sprung a new scheme on "Prex" which led to endless comical complications, but that must come in its own order. There were other odd experiences in the mean time.

By mid-January Mr. X. found that he had six of the Faculty whom he could count upon as allies in the interests of discipline. A new ally—a new professor—was an old acquaintance, a graduate of West Point, and a man reared in the shades of the strictest of scientific schools outside the national academy. "What manner of youth have you to deal with here?" was the first question he asked Mr. X. a few days after his arrival and before he entered on his new duties. "I was talking with one of the regents last night at the hotel. A young man with his hat on the back of his head, a cigar between his teeth, and his hands in his trousers pockets strolled up, leaned against a pillar close beside us, and lounged there listening to our talk. I made a move to go away, when the regent said, 'Ah, professor, let me introduce you to my son; he's a student and will doubtless be in your classes.' I was a little taken aback at the form of introduction, but bowed civilly to the young fellow, and he, languidly withdrawing one hand from his pocket, but in no other wise changing his position, patronizingly extended it to me and queried, 'Well, professor, what do you think of the university so far?'"

X. did not even ask the name; he knew instantly who the "young fellow" must be, and burst out laughing at the comical fatality that had presented to the most punctilious of professors the opportunity of meeting first, of all the undergraduates, the young man whom most of his fellows called "that consummate ass." However, it was an ill wind that blew good into the cause of the military department. The new addition to the Faculty proved a valuable ally in the discussions that enlivened the spring term.

But, before they began, Mr. X. had his first experience with Western legislative methods and with the devices brought to bear upon the Solons of the State to influence their action. It will be remembered that in the April number it was recorded that the president of the university had only two points to urge upon the new instructor of "tactics and discipline:" one was that he should endeavor to get along "without friction;" the other that he should get the university battalion into the State militia, for the reason that there each member received an annual allowance of five dollars to help keep him in uniform. That, as members of the State force, the students might be called upon to perform grave duties, and be ordered on active service in case of riot or tumult, was a contingency too remote to be worthy of his consideration, perhaps. At all events he again urged the matter on Mr. X. in the fall, and many of the students themselves (the enthusiastic soldiers especially) came to say it was almost the unanimous wish of the one hundred members of the battalion. So Mr. X. called upon the governor and ask him to recommend in his annual message to the Legislature the passage of an act increasing the State force by two companies, to be composed of students of the university, with all the allowances, etc., of the regularly-mustered militia. The governor consulted the adjutant-general, who favored the project; promised, and kept his promise. The adjutant-general drafted the bill and the bill was regularly introduced, accompanied by a letter from Mr. X. setting forth the reasons and stating that it was the desire of a large majority of the members of the battalion to be regularly enrolled in the service of the State. The bill and the letter were read to the battalion before going to the capitol. There was demur on the part of some twenty students, who either wanted to "argue the question" or to take time to think over it. Mr. X. had been led to suppose that there was hardly any opposition to the move, and promptly notified these young men that no one would have to enlist who did not desire to do so, but, as over seventy-five per cent. of those present favored the passage of the act, the bill would go in. "Prex" was much surprised at the news of opposition. "I thought you told me the boys all wanted it," he said.

"Not at all, sir! The suggestion came from you in the first place, and I told *you* that the students told *me* almost every man was in favor of it."

"Well, it ought to become a law. It will benefit the largest number," was the reply.

Then began the students' meetings. They were always ready to hold mass-meetings, and the big assembly-room of the 'varsity was generally at their service. Fiery and impassioned was the oratory on such occasions, and not a little eloquence was developed. Needless to say the soldiers of the schools were not the successful talkers. Not content with their own representatives, the opponents of the

measure called on the prominent speakers of the senior and junior classes. Furious were the denunciations hurled at the bill and its projectors. "Military despotism," "enforced conscription," "damnable blow at our freedom," were the mildest terms applied to the measure itself, while "pipe-clayed martinet," "military satrap," etc., were the descriptives lavishly heaped upon the catspaw, Mr. X., who had been dragged into the thing against his better judgment through the superior strategy of "Prex." The university papers and the local press took up the cry, and then, one memorable day, up rose the Hon. Mr. Somebody in the Legislature with an immense petition. As a consequence of the mass-meetings and the fiery eloquence aforementioned, a large number of students, who had originally backed the bill, had weakened and gone to the other side. In no mild terms did the representative of the people characterize the statement of the Professor of Military Tactics "that it was the wish of a large majority of the members of the battalion to see the bill become a law."

"At the greatest estimate," said he, "not more than one hundred and forty names can be rightfully placed on the rolls of this so-called battalion. Here in my hand I hold a paper protesting in most vehement terms against that statement and against the passage of this most obnoxious and iniquitous bill. Judge for yourselves, gentlemen, judge for yourselves, for it is signed by no less than one hundred and forty-six names, all students, who would be compelled to take the oath of enlistment if this bill were to become a law."

Thunder and Mars! but didn't that create a sensation? The bill had been referred to the Committee on Military Affairs, and there came to Mr. X. a message to the effect that the sooner he could get to the capitol and explain the very awkward position in which he was placed the better it would be for his reputation. X. went, mad as a hornet, but determined to hold his tongue and his temper. An impressive, an awe-inspiring, body was this solemn-faced committee when X. strode in and the chairman handed him the petition and asked him, "What have you to say to that?"

Here at his side as he writes to-day is the copy accurately made then and there of the petition and its imposing array of signatures. The whole thing was explained at a glance. So far from its being signed by seven-score students who would have to "bear arms," the boys, in their determination to create a feeling against the bill, had resorted to the old, old trick of ringing in any and every name they could control, and the eminent legislator, eager to pose in a sensational scene, had lent himself to it. Here on the paper were indeed sixty names of young men who were members of the battalion, and most of whom had originally endorsed the letter stating that the bill "was the wish of the large majority." But now, to discredit that statement, all was fish that came to their net, and the leaders of the

opposition had procured the signatures of thirteen students who were physically disqualified and had been excused from all duty by Mr. X., and whose names were not on the rolls of the battalion; of five young men who were exempt from duty by a decision of the president; of ten so-called "sub-freshmen," not yet matriculated, and of course not in the battalion; of nine seniors who had long since served their time and had no earthly business interfering now; of *thirty-five* juniors, also no longer required to perform military duty; of one member of the law class who never came near the 'varsity except to stir up the coals at some such mass-meeting as this; of four names of men as mythical as Sairy Gamp's Mrs. Harris,—men whose names were not on the 'varsity books at all; and finally, to make the list cover the possible total of the battalion,—one hundred and forty-six, and being just three short,—three patriotic young men were easily induced to sign a second time, and their triumphant representative in the "House" was enabled to make his damaging assault on the statement of Mr. X.

It took but a short time to point out the details of the trick to the Military Committee and receive their assurance of entire satisfaction and sympathy. It took much longer, however, for Mr. X. to cool down and consider the language in which he should ask of the president redress for the wrong done him before the Legislature of the State by a body of students acting in mass-meeting under his, the president's, verbal sanction. When sure of his self-control, Mr. X. took the big sheet on which the petition and signatures were copied, laid it before the head of the 'varsity, briefly and coolly told him of the false position in which he had been placed and the humiliation that had been forced upon him of "explaining" to the committee, and ended by saying that he considered it a matter of sufficient gravity to call for the action of the president and Faculty.

The head of the college, cold, stolid, imperturbable as ever, glanced over the list of names, noted the facts to which his attention had been called, and then coldly pushed it back, picked up his pen, and remarked,—

"I don't see that I can do anything in the matter. You appear to be somewhat sensitive. *You must expect things of this kind here.*"

And so ended the second lesson. The third came speedily.

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING,
U.S.A.

(To be continued.)

SERVICE SALAD.

Readers of "The United Service" are cordially invited to contribute to this department items of either fact or fancy, grave or gay, instructive or only entertaining; in short, any literary flotsam and jetsam likely to interest our subscribers.

THE editor of THE UNITED SERVICE has great pleasure in announcing that Medical Director Edward Shippen, U.S.N., will, beginning with the July number, furnish each month a ten-page *résumé* of the more important articles appearing in the service journals of England and the Continent.

That this series of papers will be exceedingly interesting and important is most certain, and we heartily congratulate our readers upon the fact that Dr. Shippen has undertaken their preparation.

Some Military Dogs.

WE often hear quoted the aphorism, from Ecclesiastes, that "there is no new thing under the sun," which in these latter days of electric and other discovery and application may not be exactly true; but it is so nearly true that the exceptions may be said to prove the rule.

It is certainly true in regard to the military employment of *Canis familiaris*, now quite in vogue again, after an interregnum.

That faithful and unswerving friend of man (whether descended from jackal or wolf does not now matter, and will never be decided), that faithful friend, with his incorruptible fidelity, his forbearing and enduring affections, and his inexhaustible diligence, ardor, and obedience to the master to whom he attached himself, has, from the earliest period, assisted that master in resisting the attacks of enemies whether men or brutes. Not only has he always done this, but he has uniformly assisted his master in procuring sustenance by the chase, in the ages when agriculture was unknown and man himself was purely a hunting animal. As for the origin and breeds of dogs, what do we know? The Egyptian monuments and picture-writings show that, five thousand years ago, they had hound and greyhound, the mastiff-like watch-dog, and the turn-spit.

The Assyrian dogs, seen on the bass-reliefs, must have been huge fellows, trained not only to hunting the lion, but for human warfare, and the best authorities think they were the same as the great Thibetan mastiff quite recently imported by the Persian nobility: the same noble animals which, in the great Himalayan heights, guard the flocks from the attacks of leopards, wearing spiked collars as defensive armor for their necks.

The city of Corinth was saved from assault by its war-dogs; and we have records of their use in an aggressive way, as in the case of the King of Lydia, who fought the Cimmerians with regularly-trained bands of dogs of great size. The Magnesians fought the Ephesians with dogs; and instances might be multiplied of their use in ancient times either for the direct attack, throwing the ranks into disorder, or for the exposure of ambuscades. The soldiers of the Roman legions, under iron discipline, dreaded the war-dogs of the Cimbri.

The elder Pliny was a great admirer of war-dogs, and says that when once engaged they never loosened their grip, and, unlike their human comrades, never asked to have their pay raised.

Pliny was the first to write of the great war-dogs of the Guanches, the aborigines of the Canary Islands; which

required for the purpose is nothing to a nation which, like ours, is possessed of superabundant means. All the money required would be spent in the country. None would be withdrawn from productive industry, seeing that both capital and labor are far in excess of its requirements. The outlay would give employment, which is more scarce than capital, and its result could hardly be called unproductive if it give security to production. It is the working-classes who would especially benefit by the expenditure, as the wage-fund would thereby be increased, and this chiefly at the expense of the wealthy. It is therefore difficult to understand why they should be opponents to defensive measures which would benefit both themselves and the community at large. In short, it is impossible to say that the nation as a whole would be sensibly poorer by the adoption of measures which would establish its security and augment its influence in preserving the peace of Europe, which at the present moment affords no prospect of permanency.

ARMSTRONG.

THE TRIALS OF STAFF-OFFICERS.

TWO YEARS OF COLLEGE DUTY.

(Continued from Vol. I. page 651.)

It was in the midst of the winter term that the "legislative" experience recounted in the last chapter was met, and it seemed to bring about a revulsion of feeling. Only two drills per week were now being required of the students; the officers and non-commissioned officers, with two or three exceptions, were learning their "tactics" thoroughly and doing their duty with spirit and precision. Out of the one hundred and forty whose names were on the list for military service on the 1st of January, eighty were making good progress, and Mr. X. was feeling measurably satisfied with the discipline.

This, however, was of a purely personal character. The refusal of the president to impose any punishment upon the young men who had worked up the fraudulent scheme which "killed" his own project for the enrollment of the battalion in the State troops convinced Mr. X. that he could not look to that official for support in the event of disturbance. Things were going smoothly, however, and the "awkward squads" of backsliders who had evaded duty the previous term were slowly catching up, when one day the head of the 'varsity developed a new idiosyncrasy, and the result was another "break."

Michael, the president's Mercury, appeared after drill one day and said that Mr. X. was wanted at the office, and Mr. X. went. The president responded civilly to the officer's salutation, relinquished his pen, and, after a moment's consideration, began,—

"I believe I—ah—*did* say, Mr. X., that I would leave in your hands the matter of excusing those students who were physically unable to drill, and I think you sent me a list of those so excused."

"I did, sir. I had no idea that the young men of my old State were so crippled a community until I came here. It could not be helped, Mr. President. Those twenty-seven young gentlemen are all in one way or another unfit for military duty of any kind, and I *had* to excuse them."

"Very true. You did perfectly right. It was—ah—about another

matter I meant to consult you,—the cases of Fletcher and Ferguson (let us call them), whom, they tell me, you refuse to excuse."

"Certainly, sir. There is nothing the matter with either of those two young men except too much cigarette-smoking and late hours. If I excuse them I simply put a premium on dissipation."

"Well—ah—they have appealed to me, and they bring me letters from their family physicians, saying that the excitement and violent exercise of military drill is very apt to do them harm, and urging that they be excused."

"Mr. President, those two young men are much better able to drill than I am. There hasn't been enough excitement about the drill to make it interesting, perhaps, and there has been absolutely no violent exercise. They were prominent members of the battalion last year, and held high positions as sergeants. This year they were not promoted because they absented themselves from several drills last fall and were careless and negligent in their duties. That is where the shoe pinches. They belong to the swell society of the college, have plenty of money, play tip-top games of billiards, and used to be magnates in the battalion. They want to get out of it now because they were not appointed commissioned officers, and both of them have rolled up an array of unexcused absences already this term. To let them off is simply to encourage everybody else to follow in their footsteps."

"But there is another view of the case. We cannot afford to make a mistake or do an injustice, Mr. X. It is far better that we should be hoodwinked by fifty or even a hundred of these young men than that we should compel one of their number to do duty when he is really unfit for it. The regents, I am sure, would not sustain such a state of things, and where a young man brings a certificate from his family physician that drill would harm him, it is my belief that we should excuse him."

"Will you let me see the certificate in the case of Mr. Fletcher, Mr. President?" asked Mr. X. And the document was duly produced. It was, omitting a preamble, to the effect that the young man had suffered from typhoid fever ten years previous, as follows:

"He now complains of soreness in the lungs and a return of the pain in the back, and I enjoin the utmost care in avoiding exposure to atmospheric changes or exercise except of the most cautious nature. The drill restarted the difficulty last spring, and for his safety it will be necessary to excuse him."

Mr. X. pondered a moment. Mr. Fletcher had never seemed to have anything the matter with him until after the appointments were made. Then everything about his physical system must have collapsed all of a sudden. In all the university there had been no surer batter, no fleeter base-runner, no more brilliant fielder than Fletcher. He was the pride of the 'varsity nine, and X., who took immense interest in the

university athletics, was overwhelmed with regret that in the match games with the adjoining States and in the College League we could no more have our crack second baseman. If he couldn't drill, *of course* he couldn't play ball. Then X. asked to see Mr. Ferguson's; and Mr. Ferguson's good old family doctor set forth that he had known his patient from babyhood, and had frequently of late years detected incipient heart-trouble, which had been greatly aggravated within the past six months by the violent exercise required of him in military drill (nothing but the manual and quick time had been reached so far), and the doctor urged that he be excused, at least until spring. The more Mr. X. thought of it the less he believed in either malady, and so told the president.

But that wiser and older head prevailed. "We cannot afford to go contrary to the certificates of the family physicians," he said. "We must take no risk, no responsibilities. I—I see no way out of it but to excuse the young men at once."

X. begged that they might be examined by some one of the local physicians who had served in the army,—by Doctor G——, who was on the Faculty; by somebody who *knew* what the drill was, and not by these good old country home practitioners, who had never seen anything but an old-time militia muster in their lives; but it was all useless. The fiat went forth. Messrs. Fletcher and Ferguson grinned affably at Mr. X. when they met him down town two days afterwards, and then the fun began.

Up to this time, in all cases that were not self-evident, Mr. X. had required the certificates of local physicians whom he knew, and who could see for themselves what was going on at drill. This had proved a stumbling-block to a number of young fellows who were unable to convince these experts that their systems were out of gear. The moment it was noised abroad, however, that the president had excused two such prominent students as Fletcher and Ferguson, there was a revival of activity in medical certificates. In less than a fortnight a score of youths appeared duly armed with scraps of paper purporting to be the certificates of all manner of practitioners in all manner of places,—mainly little country villages. Mr. A——, a champion foot-ball kicker, brought the certificate of Doctor Blank, of Brown's Cross-Roads, to the effect that the young man was a martyr to muscular rheumatism. Mr. C—— presented the note of Doctor C—— (his brother), that this alert and wiry-looking sophomore was a victim to chronic catarrh of the stomach. Mr. D——, who showed up in capital form at the June field-day of the athletic society, was pronounced by his local M.D. sorely afflicted with neuralgia of the heart. Mr. E——, of Lost Prairie, was the son of consumptive parents, and was threatened with phthisis of alarming nature,—so said his complaisant medical adviser. Mr. F—— had a pulsating tumor. Mr. G—— severe injury in the

groin. Mr. H—— chronic spinal meningitis. Mr. I—— chronic catarrh of the head, "which the excitement and exertion of military drill would surely aggravate." And so it went through a list of maladies that would have stocked a *corps d'armée* hospital. Others—three or four in number—presented papers which, so far from setting forth any specific malady, merely expressed the opinion of the consulted (and doubtless duly fee'd) medico that military drill was harmful. One of those last named was a young man of admirable physique, and Mr. X. felt that the thing had gone too far and was a fraud of the worst order. Again he appealed to the president, but to no purpose. Having made the rule in the cases of Fletcher and Ferguson, he could not recede, he said, and the whole "raft" stood excused. In one case, which was so barefaced a fraud that the young man could not help snickering as he presented the paper, Mr. X. determined to write personally to the doctor for further particulars. Meantime, said "Prex," the young gentleman should stand excused with the others. No answer came to the first letter. In two weeks Mr. X. wrote again. No answer to that. Inquiry of the postmaster developed the fact that the letters had been duly delivered to the "doctor," who was a youngster just out of some Western medical college and an old playmate of the student in the case. These facts were presented to "Prex," and the student was hauled up to explain; but he never rejoined the battalion. When the spring term began, and the boys in blue halted for a brief rest under the trees on the edge of the campus, there, all around them, smoking their cigarettes, lolling in the sunshine, not infrequently racing full-tilt after the foot-ball or running bases like deer, were the victims of heart-disease, asthma, catarrh, and muscular rheumatism. The gentleman whose family physician forbade "all exercise except of the most cautious nature," never missed a game in all the practice season, and covered second base with credit and himself with glory all through the League contests, but the president never would consent to reverse his decision in the case. "If wrong has been done, it is the young man himself and the physician who must bear the onus," was his consoling disposition of the matter.

The young man crippled by muscular rheumatism developed astonishing proficiency in the regular course of the sparring class, and was pronounced by the local professor of the fistic art "one of the likeliest light-weight amateurs" in the West. Another young man who had applied to Mr. X. in vain for excuse from drill, and finally lost his temper and told his instructor that he considered it an insult to be compelled to undergo military discipline, obtained a certificate of disability and was duly excused. Less than two months afterwards this same youth, armed with a letter from the president himself, came to Mr. X. to request from him a recommendation for an appointment in the regular army. While it is by no means certain that he would have obtained the desired position if Mr. X. *had* furnished the recom-

mendation, it *is* certain that he did not get it, and that the president got a letter telling him why.

But if the "stalwarts" of the battalion—the eighty "good men and true" who daily stood by their guns and did honor to themselves and their colors—were chagrined to see the laggards triumphant in this matter, it proved after all of infinite value in shaping the future course of the Faculty. Already the rank absurdity of the system had appealed to everybody who had the faintest interest in the matter. Half the professors by this time were warmly seconding Mr. X.'s efforts. The State officers were becoming advocates of soldierly discipline, and, best of all, there was an admirable company of militia at the capital composed of the flower of the young men of the town. They had a fine armory; wore a natty uniform; gave occasional delightful parties, but, above all, were commanded by one of the most accomplished soldiers it has ever been Mr. X.'s lot to meet; and he made them soldiers, too, every mother's son of them. One day a dangerous riot suddenly broke out in a Northern city. The authorities were almost stunned by its fury and strength. There was only one way to quell it, and in one hour from the receipt of the order every man but two of this company was under arms and ready. Another hour and away they went by rail. Five days afterwards, when they returned, the people gave them a rousing welcome, and the four or five of the 'varsity battalion who were also members of the Guard were held in higher esteem than ever before. It was a great thing just then to belong to that company, and no young American in town was thought to amount to much unless he could claim membership.

One fine spring morning, as the battalion was forming for drill, who should appear but a student of the freshman class, a resident of the town, and one of the best-looking and most popular young fellows in society. He was one of those who had been excused from drill during this epidemic of certificates, but upon the certificate of one of the oldest and most respected physicians of the place, on account of some asthmatic trouble. Now, voluntarily, he appeared once more in uniform and said he was ready to go on duty again. A day or two afterwards Mr. X. was speaking to the senior captain of some matters, and expressed his pleasure at the manliness of young D—— in thus coming forward during the thickest of the drills when he might as well have stayed away. The young captain's mouth began to twitch with suppressed merriment and his eyes to twinkle with fun.

"What is it, captain? I see there's something behind this."

"I should say there was, sir. Mr. D—— wanted to join the Guards, and put in his application last meeting and got gloriously blackballed. They said they wouldn't have a man who shirked his duty with the battalion, and the only way he could get in with them was to stick to his work here."

X. went down and sought out the Guards' captain, and found that the facts were practically as stated. It did his heart good, in all this uphill, unpaid, unappreciated work, to find support like that. Another year, and the Guards' captain and he began their work, so to speak, in double harness, and it continues to this day.

In another year, too, Mr. X.'s views as to the necessity and propriety of there being one duly accredited local physician to decide on those alleged cases of disability, prevailed over those of the president. The Faculty passed the measure by a rousing vote.

June came; so did the competitive drills, with regulars for judges and swarms of pretty girls among the spectators, and the president came with most of the Faculty, and the battalion, in snug-fitting dark-blue uniforms, with white webbing belts and glistening plates, looked trim and neat as could be desired, and were steady as rocks at review. Prizes were distributed; speeches made by distinguished visitors, including the governor and the adjutant-general, and, despite all its struggles and tribulations, the "Department of Military Science and Tactics" was established on a firm basis. The regents met and voted that, hereafter, Mr. X. should have the salary he demanded in the first place, but forgot to say anything about the six hundred dollars due for the first year. This *he* did not forget, however, and did not mean to. They even came to *that* in course of years; but not until long after he had quit the 'varsity and entered a broader field.

When the second year began Mr. X. found himself suddenly nominated and unanimously elected to the position of secretary of the Faculty, and from that time on, during the hebdomadal deliberations of that august body, sat side by side with his friend the president, and could look his erstwhile opponents in the face. Two months after the session opened and the president of the board of regents desired that Mr. X. should state in writing how things were now going in his department, that officer was enabled to assert that, from the interest displayed by the large body of students engaged in the duties, and the cordial support he was now receiving at the hands of the Faculty, it was apparent that instruction in military tactics and discipline was no longer regarded as a necessary evil.

But the troubles were by no means over. There were two or three slippery customers among the young men liable to military duty who seemed proof against the best-laid schemes of every- and anybody connected with the institution. One youth in particular, whom we will call Allen, because that was very far from being his name, had established for himself the reputation for being the consummate master of every trick and dodge known to students in general for evading duties and escaping punishment. He had belonged to the battalion before X. went to the 'varsity, and had "cut" more drills than he attended. He had a record of unexcused absences from recitations in Greek, in

Latin, in mathematics, etc., that would have swamped a dozen students of ordinary ability. Twice, when on the verge of dismissal, he had obviated that necessity by gracefully withdrawing of his own accord and retiring to the parental roof in a neighboring city, where it seems he swayed the household much at will, and then as blandly would he reappear at the beginning of another term and smilingly assure the professors in charge of the studies he proposed to patronize that his health was now sufficiently restored to permit him to return to his duties. When informed that, without the sanction of the president, he could not be permitted to resume his attendance on lectures and recitations, Mr. Allen placidly assured the official that there would be no difficulty about that: and indeed there did not seem to be. His name once more appeared among those of the special students, and the young man would occasionally saunter in and confer the light of his presence upon the class-room. He lived alone somewhere in the town; he had no friends or associates among the students; he had plenty of money to spend upon himself, and was often to be found sitting around the billiard-rooms and offices of the hotels. His father was something of a politician, and while the Legislature was in session Mr. Allen appeared only semi-occasionally at the university, and haunted the galleries of the Senate or Assembly, sucking in such wisdom as could be extracted from the head of his cane and the debates of the Solons there assembled. When asked for the president's excuse for his absences of the previous week, Mr. Allen would appear both pained and surprised.

"*Was* I absent on the 11th and 12th? Why, yes, professor; you are right. I remember now,—an engagement with my dentist. I'll see the president right after recitation, and get a card from him." Then it would be a day or two before the class recited to that particular professor, and when again they appeared and Allen was called upon for his card of excuse, he would respond, "I greatly regret it, professor; but I've not yet been able to see the president. I've been twice to his office and once to his house, but he was out both times."

"Very well, sir," would perhaps be the reply, "if that card is not presented by Monday morning your name goes to the Faculty Monday afternoon."

And when Monday came the youth would not appear at all. His name would be reported at Faculty meeting as delinquent beyond the legal limit of unexcused absences. "Prex" would say he had long since told the young man he would give him no more excuses, and Professor B—— would thereupon receive instructions to write to the parents of Mr. Allen and inform them that his name was stricken from the rolls; but early on Tuesday, Allen would appear at the professor's door, to walk up to college with him and tell him how sorry he was to have missed lecture yesterday morning, but that a wretched cold had seized him on Saturday, and Doctor Wilkins had declared he

must not leave the house. And when told of the action of the Faculty in his case his surprise and pain would be indescribable. In terms of gentlest reproach he would upbraid the professor for supposing it possible that he would willfully or willingly evade college duties. Then he would go to the president, and, in some way, the thing would be patched up. "I don't believe what he says, or what his father says, for that matter, but I cannot disprove, and therefore can only accept their statements," was the summary of the situation as expressed by our patient superior. And so from month to month Mr. Allen would wriggle along,—a reproach to everybody, and yet a youth too plausible for the authorities to sternly suppress and too slippery to be caught.

Through medical and presidential excuses the young man had succeeded in having wiped out the string of unexcused absences against him in the military department in the first term. But then, when Mr. X. was officially informed that the youth had been dismissed from the 'varsity, he dropped him from his rolls, and though he occasionally saw him on the street, it was not supposed that he had been allowed to return. In various ways Mr. Allen had evaded most of the duty during the first year Mr. X. spent at the institution. Now came the second, and Allen promptly appeared and registered as a special again. Three days after the drills began he was lolling on a bench in the gymnasium, apparently a pleased looker-on. When the adjutant told him to join the awkward squad, the young man smiled and said he guessed not. He had been through two years of it and was exempt now. Mr. X. proved to the Faculty the next day that Mr. Allen had not attended ten drills in all the previous year, and the Faculty unanimously voted that he must therefore join the battalion for the fall term, and Allen was so officially informed by his "class officer" on the very next day. Perhaps the Faculty wanted to see how X. would get along with this representative of the gymnotus tribe. Allen argued and protested; went to the president and implored, and was told that nothing short of Mr. X.'s report that he had faithfully completed the course would secure his excuse. Then he came to Mr. X. and begged for such a report, and Mr. X. assured him he should have it—next June—if he behaved himself meantime. Mr. Allen was ordered to join the recruit squad on the following morning; his attention was called to the fact that the Faculty had braced up and passed a rule that any student receiving ten unexcused absences in course of a year (it used to be a *term*) from this time on would be summarily expelled, and with that warning he was allowed to go.

Two weeks passed—a month—and no Allen. Each week was he reported to the Faculty as absent on Wednesday and Thursday, and by the end of October twelve or fifteen unexcused absences were recorded in all against him, and Mr. X. moved the execution of the law. It was passed *nem. con.* Again a letter was written notifying the pa-

ternal Allen of the youth's exclusion, and that afternoon X. found the young man himself awaiting the secretary on his return from meeting.

"Oh, professor, good-afternoon," he remarked, with great affability. "I thought I'd call in and see you, as this seemed to be the only place I'd be likely to find you. You know I've been up at the gymnasium four times these last ten days, but you were away. I just came in to speak about the drills. Whom should I report to Wednesday? I've been so much occupied of late that it was impossible to run up there more than once or twice, and my uniform was not ready, so I knew you would not require me to be there until it was; but it is all right now. I spoke to Mr. Morgan about coming to drill Wednesday, and he said something about my name's being scratched off. That was an accident, probably, and I thought I'd just drop in to tell you I was all ready to begin."

"It was not an accident, Mr. Allen, but the result of a regulation which was fully explained to you by both your class officer and myself. You have rolled up over ten unexcused absences in less than a month, and that ends the matter. You were voted out of the university at three o'clock this afternoon."

Allen protested that he never for a moment understood things "that way," and left Mr. X. with the assurance that he would see the president at once and have the thing fixed. The thing wasn't fixed, however. "Prex" stood firm, and said that he must go unless Mr. X. would consent to remove those absences. Then the friends and relations of the excluded youth came out and argued the point, but to no purpose. This time the law stood.

Now, however, as the spring term approached again, two other young men were at the danger line. They had repeatedly absented themselves from duty and presented excuses that were "gauzy" in the last degree. Even "Prex" began to see through them and to refuse further clemency. April and May found them over the mark, but a "stay of proceedings" was granted, much to the disgust of Mr. X., who well knew that the battalion was watching the result with keen intelligence. At last, in the interest of discipline, Mr. X. urged the case to the president as one requiring immediate action, and reminded him of the rule passed by the Faculty making those ten unexcused absences final cause for dismissal. "Prex" laid down his pen and calmly said that he thought the rule a bad one for general application. "It was a good thing to have when there was a young man, like Allen, whom everybody was eager to get rid of, and who had never been anything but a discredit to the institution;" but that he didn't believe in it, except in such cases, was plainly the upshot of his remarks. Despite their offenses, the offenders against the rules and orders of the military department were saved by executive clemency, and the other members of the battalion concluded it was about time to have a "circus."

Mr. X., at Faculty meeting, stepped out of the secretary's box and took the floor to urge immediate action. "Prex" opposed, and the Faculty, torn betwixt conflicting emotions, apparently knew not what to do. Absences from drill without reason or excuse doubled in number on the instant, and despite the excellent appearance of the battalion and the fine drills at the closing parades and muster, the commandant had had enough of that sort of work. He had been appointed an aide-de-camp on the staff of the old "war-horse" of a governor aforementioned, and was tendered certain duties in connection with the instruction of the State troops that promised to be more congenial and remunerative than university work, that was so much uphill. Then, too, he had got to scribbling for THE UNITED SERVICE, and the duties of secretary of the Faculty (unsalaried) were of constantly-increasing weight. At the end of the term, Mr. X. concluded that it was high time to let somebody else try his hand at the military department. The last thing he strove to effect in Faculty meeting was a measure by which the Faculty as a body, and not the president as an individual, should decide in these matters of discipline. But they were not ready to face the music.

In a year or two, however, it all came about, and the measures and recommendations Mr. X. strove to introduce in his time, from an examining surgeon down to a committee on discipline in the Faculty, gradually came to be looked upon as the best things, after all, and are now established facts. After "the professor" tendered his resignation the regents tried to get the War Department to increase the detail allotted to the State for their benefit. Failing in that, they unhesitatingly applied for the restoration to them of the "franchise" which they had long since turned over to their struggling up-country contemporary as something for which they had no use, and the United States officer at the smaller college, with his arms, equipments, etc., was summarily transferred to the 'varsity. Next the government began sending around its own inspectors, to see whether the colleges thus benefited were showing proper appreciation of the fact, and, finally, a board of experts, all men of large and possibly similar experience at various institutions, are now to assemble and decide on a uniform system of instruction. Verily, the times have changed and the good cause has triumphed.

"Prex" and his military professor have both long since severed their respective connections with the old 'varsity, but whenever Mr. X. drops in to take a look at the scene of his struggles of a decade ago, he realizes that those particular "trials" were not all in vain.

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING,
U.S.A.

SERVICE JOURNALS AT HOME AND ABROAD.

THE number of periodicals which treat of military and naval matters has become so great that most civilized countries can boast of at least one. Even in Roumania—where we should suppose that the interest in naval affairs could not be very great—we find a review which is partly devoted to them; and we are within bounds in stating that a list of the whole of these publications would fill a page of this magazine.

It is a source of gratification that, in the value of subjects discussed, as well as in illustration, typography, and general appearance, the professional periodicals of our own country, such as the *Journal of the Military Service Institution* and the *Proceedings of the Naval Institute*, compare most favorably with any.

The last number of the *Naval Journal*, being No. 1 of vol. xv., contains two brilliant articles,—one upon "The Most Important Question of Sheathed or Unsheathed Iron or Steel Ships," by Naval Constructer Hichborn; the other is entitled "Progressive Naval Seamanship," by Commander Sigsbee. There are also valuable papers upon "Naval Reserves," and the "Recruiting and Training of Men," by Lieutenant Sydney Staunton.

The subject of a naval reserve is now occupying the attention of the public to some extent, and articles in relation to it are exceedingly timely. Then follows one of a series of contributions upon the "Literature of Explosives," by Professor Munroe, of the Naval Torpedo Station, Newport; an article upon "Naval Coast Signals," by Lieutenant Wainwright; and professional and bibliographical notes.

There comes from Fort Leavenworth the *Journal of the United States Cavalry Association*, a bright and attractive publication, containing original articles of interest, especially to that arm of the service, as well as translations from recent authorities in Europe. A short but instructive article upon "Revolver Shooting," by Captain Hall, is most interesting. In this connection the military student will recall the plea for the use of the revolver by cavalry in the elaborate work of Lieutenant-Colonel Denison, of the British army, whose illustrations of its usefulness are mostly derived from the experience of our own Civil War.

staff, and commended in general orders for his conduct at the capture of the Mamelon Vert, at Sebastopol, and again for the battle of the Tchernaïa. At the Malakoff he again distinguished himself as chief of staff of Marshal MacMahon. In the war of 1859 he was chief of staff of the Second Corps of the French army, and was with MacMahon at Turbigo, Magenta, and Solferino, being wounded in the last battle.

In 1869, Lebrun was aide-de-camp to the emperor, and upon the declaration of war with Germany was put in charge of the staff of the Army of the Rhine, but soon resigned that appointment to take command of the Twelfth Corps,—so soon to have such a terrible experience at Bazeilles. Here he was wounded by a fragment of shell, and had two horses killed under him on the eventful day of Sédan, when he was taken prisoner.

Upon his return to France, after several months of captivity, he became commandant of the Third Corps, at Rouen, and retained that post for six years, being finally relieved at his own request. Although he had reached the retiring age in 1874, General Lebrun was accorded an indefinite extension of active duty on account of having commanded in chief and distinguishing himself in the face of the enemy. In addition to the grand cross of the Legion of Honor, he also received orders from England, Italy, and Sardinia, Turkey, the Papal States, Austria, and elsewhere.

E. Shippen.

THE TRIALS OF STAFF-OFFICERS.

THE TELEPHONE AS AN ADJUNCT TO THE NATIONAL GUARD.

THE riot alarm struck just at 8.45 as Mr. X. was trudging his way down to the armory. Late as midnight there had been a conference. The mayor, the sheriff, the governor of the State, the general manager of the biggest railway of the Northwest, the adjutant-general of the State,—one of the finest soldiers it has ever been Mr. X.'s lot to be associated with, and of whom he wrote in a previous paper,—and finally Mr. X. himself. The governor knew and had reason to know that the civil authorities could not control the situation. The mayor and the sheriff—both Germans—thought that they might control the mob by some native eloquence of their own. *We*—the governor, the adjutant-general, and Mr. X., now a colonel and aide-de-camp on the staff of the governor—had convictions to the contrary. We *knew* the civil authorities could *not* control the mob, and that nothing short of the sharp arm of the National Guard would put an end to the lawlessness and riot.

The mob—mostly Germans and Polanders—had swept through the valley of the Menomonee, cleaning out the railway shops, driving workmen from their benches, threatening death to any man who dared to work after their demand, "*acht stunde*" (eight hours), had been acted upon by the employers—unless in their interest. The great Allis works—the finest in the West—were closed because the mob threatened the workmen, and the civil authorities were powerless to protect them, and the mammoth rolling mills far down towards the South Point were to be the next object of attack.

Out in the Menomonee Valley worse things prevailed. There lay the great shops of the Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway Company, every man driven from his bench. The round-house, the machine-shops, the repair-shops, with a thousand plucky employés; yet, having no organization, no leader, no arms, they had been driven from their places by a mob of frenzied Polanders and "low Germans," and the municipal authorities, with a reserve of fifty police, and the county magnates, with the sheriff and his *posse comitatus*, and the Teutonic eloquence of the two combined could effect nothing. Neither one would risk his

political chances by declaring war against the vagabonds that had already despoiled the city's fair name. Neither dared to call in certain aid against the German name; both knew that, while at the outset the strike was begun by honest but misguided workmen, in less than twenty-four hours the strikers were re-enforced by all the thugs, thieves, and blackguards that could be found in a population of two hundred thousand,—mostly foreigners,—and, above all, that they were now being hourly incited by the furious speeches of avowed Anarchist leaders to proceed at once to the enforcement of their demands by the application of the torch and their own peculiar explosive, dynamite. It was known and well known that the Anarchists had been drilling under arms for weeks ahead, and the mayor himself knew, five days before the great parade, under the red flag, of the 2d of May, that every pawnbroker's or second-hand shop in town had been gutted of its arms.

Knowing well the evil elements in the population, strenuous efforts had been made for some time beforehand by our adjutant-general to get the National Guard into shape for business. We had three pretty good regiments in the State and one battalion of infantry of four companies in the metropolis. But a crack troop of cavalry and a light battery manned by an admirably drilled complement of cannoneers, all dashing young Americans, were our local main-stays. Of course we were balked by demagogue politicians in the Legislature, and the governor himself was for a long time reluctant to believe that there was any necessity for this preparation. He showed the stuff he was made of, however, one night at a convention of the officers of the National Guard, when Mr. X. had inflicted upon them a long lecture on riot duty. No sooner had the lecturer finished than up rose the commander-in-chief. Six feet three in his stockings, with a head and mane and beard like a gray lion, massive and impressive, the biggest man of the hundreds in the senate chamber.

"Gentlemen," he shouted, "I want to say one thing right now. Colonel X. is all right except in just one point,—in his instructions and warnings about the way you receive orders from mayors and marshals and sheriffs. Don't you worry about that! Whenever the time comes for you to tackle a mob in this State, I'll be *thar* as quick as you can, *and you'll get your orders from me.*"

The applause that greeted the chief was deafening; but could we have looked ahead a brace of years and seen how superbly that stalwart promise was to be redeemed, the dome of the capitol would not have stood the uproar.

However, as the spring of '86 wore on, the adjutant-general at the capital and Mr. X. in the metropolis were in almost daily communication.

The latter was advised to keep constant watch on the situation, and

the days were rare when he was not riding through the very large districts occupied by the Polanders and the socialistic Germans, and sending his conclusions to his superior. The detectives willingly told him all they knew, but the chief of police (a German of most kindly and affable character, who had recently stepped into the position with no knowledge whatever of police or detective work and no aptitude for either, but simply because the mayor, a German, wanted a German in that place) deprecated all rumors of threatening meetings among the Germans, and as the governor had among his political advisers and henchmen at the capital several Germans, and one of the lowest of low Germans on his staff, it seemed impossible for the adjutant-general to induce him even to order the ammunition so desperately needed at the metropolis. (We had not three rounds per man of rifle, carbine, or pistol ammunition. As for the battery, they had neither shell nor canister.)

A shrewd politician was the old chief. He did not mean to let any man brand him as an intimidator; but, just at the fag end of April, he concluded to drop in and take a look for himself, and what he saw and heard seemed to bring about instantaneous change. He whisked back to the capital and wired at once to Rock Island for ball cartridge enough to clean out a *corps d'armée*—provided they hit. Even then, however, he did not mean to show his teeth. Mr. X. got orders to meet the first installment at the station as the train came in, and there, with some stout drays in readiness, that officer received several innocent-looking dry-goods boxes, variously inscribed "overcoats," "blankets," etc.; but the draymen wondered at the marvelous weight. In an hour more the veteran quartermaster-sergeant of the "Light Horse," with the assistance of one man, had knocked those boxes to flinders and lugged their contents down into the vaults of the armory,—and only three men knew that thirty thousand rounds were ready.

On Sunday, May 2, with red flags innumerable, the Anarchists Socialists, and—sorry day for them that ever they took up with such company—thousands of Knights of Labor, made their big parade. At the fine stone armory of the Light Horse,—which they built themselves, as the State declined to,—in the quarters of the troop and of that gallant Irish company, "The Sheridan Guard," a couple of dozen quiet men in civilian dress looked grimly from the windows, making no reply to occasional demonstrations of hatred and defiance from the procession. No disturbance occurred; no one interfered with the picnic; but the next morning the riot burst forth with the rising sun all over the manufacturing districts, and in twelve hours our fair city was in the hands of a howling mob, with a German mayor, a German sheriff, a German chief of police, whose force was largely made up of Germans, and all of whom owed their positions to the preponderance of German voters, as our sole legal barrier against anarchy and ruin.

At eight o'clock that night Mr. X. was drilling the battery in the use of small arms with which to defend their wooden armory, far uptown and close to the "Polack" settlements (shell and canister still they had none), and at ten he received a dispatch to report at once to the governor, who was hastening in by special train.

It was about midnight that the conference aforementioned was going on. The governor was eager to take hold at once, but could not unless the local authorities begged his aid, and this, after much "palaver," they finally declined to do.

It was about 1 A.M., therefore, that the general manager, whose shops, round-houses, etc., had all been cleaned out, and whose elevators, rolling-stock, etc., were now threatened, called in his division superintendent.

"Then it is understood, gentlemen, that we can have no further protection than you have given us thus far?"

The mayor and sheriff began to explain that they looked for better things on the morrow, but finally admitted that no further force was to be used.

"That ends it, then." And he turned to his assistant: "Give orders to close up every thing, Mr. Collins."

"Very good, Mr. Miller."

And so the conference ended.

All the same, we had our orders for the morrow. And sure enough, about 8 o'clock A.M. the civic authorities threw up the sponge and fled to the governor for aid, and at 8.45 all over the city the fire-bells were clanging, as aforesaid, the stirring riot alarm. X. made a quick run for the armory and was getting into uniform in the officers' room, while the troop was rapidly assembling in the riding-hall and the Sheridans were darting up the stairs to their quarters on the second floor. Then the telephone in the office began its "R-r-r-r-r-r-ring," and just then in came the chief and the adjutant-general. The first news was that the "Polacks" were threatening the battery armory. The guns were in danger, and between listening at the 'phone with one ear and to arriving officers with the other, the governor's first order was to have those guns run down here as quick as possible. Mr. X. was put in command of the troop, battery, and the infantry at the Central station. In forty minutes every command in town was reported by wire as ready for duty at its armory.

An orderly sent to the battery armory came back on the run to say they couldn't move their guns because they had no horses, and Mr. X. was in saddle in short order and trotting northward with a few troopers to "stir them up." It was a quick case of "man the pole, splinter bar, and wheels." Then the guns were in the street and rolling leisurely down town, a small guard was left with carbines and abundant ammunition, and, with cannoneers somewhat blown and vastly aston-

ished, those guns were soon parked in the big riding-hall. Meantime, the Fourth Battalion, under its German major, had rapidly assembled and been whirled off by special train to "Bay View," where a great mob was already gathering about the rolling mills; a knot of excited citizens were clattering around the governor; an expert "telephonist" was at the instrument rapidly transmitting messages to and from the chief or adjutant-general. Every company of the First Infantry, as far out as Darlington on the line of the Southern branch of the railway, fully one hundred and fifty miles, had reported ready and only waiting for the cars; some were already *en route*. We knew that by 3.30 we would be re-enforced by at least four companies, with others coming close on their heels; but meantime, said the excited citizens, what was to become of the Allis works, the stove-works, the great flour-mills, the magnificent elevators, and, above all, the *breweries?* Mobs were gathering around each and every one, so declared each new arrival, and X. and his cavalry were kept on the jump whisking around town and exploding these *canards*. There wasn't a mob at any one of these points that a platoon couldn't have larruped. But at one of the great German gardens there *was* a throng,—half honest *arbeiter*, half "toughs,"—listening to blood-curdling harangues from their leaders, and these fellows we reconnoitred from time to time, while solid ranks of police stood near the gates.

Down at Bay View the battalion—very badly handled—had been drawn within the gates by a species of march by the flank in single file through a crowd that followed them with imprecations and brickbats and nearly overwhelmed the rearmost company, which was composed, oddly enough, mainly of Polanders, but of a better class. A dozen panicky shots were fired which seemed to set everybody to running, and our expert at the telephone was kept dancing and shouting at the instrument for a full half-hour, when suddenly the thing joined the strikers and refused to work.

"Our line's cut, sir, between here and the Central," was the quick report.

"Run up another, and be lively," said the chief.

Then came the order for Mr. X. and the cavalry to speed forth again, this time to tackle a gang at the railway depot, where they were gathered with the evident idea of making it lively for the in-coming troops. We found them ugly, blasphemous, and obscene, but not dangerous. The first platoon cleared the needed space in ten seconds without firing a shot or delivering a whack with the sabre. The other three formed facing outward, so that we had a big, clear rectangle three hundred yards long, and here in fifteen minutes formed the arriving infantry and a mysterious little four-wheeled wagon. "*Verdamptes mitrailleuse!*" exclaimed one of the scowlers on the sidewalk. We were off for the armory in a moment more, covering the broad streets

from curb to curb, but the mob did not follow with so much as a pebble.

Except a brief disagreement between a battalion of the First Infantry and an overwhelming gang that had driven the police "galley west," nothing of consequence occurred in town that afternoon or evening. Fast as the troops arrived they were sent to important points,—one little detachment out to the railway shops; a stronger one, four companies, to the Allis works; others to re-enforce Mr. X. at the Central station which, said the police, the rioters meant to attack in force and rescue the ringleaders and rioters "run in" during the day.

But the main anxiety was about Bay View as the late hours of the evening came round.

Whatever the German major might think, he had two or three timorous parties on his staff who were perpetually wailing over the telephone that their position was most hazardous; the mob was all around them in heavy force; burning freight-cars, etc. *Couldn't* more troops be sent?

The governor learned by ten at night that furious meetings had been held in various resorts on the South Side, and that a genuine uprising had taken place among the Poles, who, in response to the rabid harangues of their leaders, resolved to march in full numbers on the following morning, strip the insolent militia of their arms, and drive them into the lake. As a consequence, two *American* companies appeared on the right of the battalion line, making six in all, when the vast mob, waving the flags of anarchy and of some socialistic society over their heads, came thronging into view on the morning of the 4th of May.

Meantime, the governor, over the telephone, had had brief converse with the commander. We were, indeed, "getting our orders from him," and they were brief and explicit,—

"If that mob marches on you in the morning, open fire, sir, and drive 'em back."

It so happened that Mr. X. was in the office the next morning when the worn-out orderly at the telephone suddenly called for the governor.

"Message from Bay View, sir. The mob's advancing."

The chief sprang to the instrument and sung out, "Hullo! Hey? That you, major? What do you say? They're coming, are they? Then give it to 'em! Fire at once!"

And with one volley the back-bone of local anarchy was broken.

There was tremendous uproar and excitement that day in our city. The mobs were everywhere, but the main body was gathered at their big garden on the West Side. Mr. X. had only the troop and two companies of infantry with him when at two o'clock the police telephoned that they were completely overwhelmed at that point; that

they were being fired on and driven, and they wanted "all the help that could be sent them."

"Now, I want this thing stopped for good and all," said the chief. "Here, X., take the Light Horse and what infantry you have and wind it up."

In fifteen minutes we were there. The Light Horse pulled the police out of the hole they were in; the infantry silently and sternly drove back the howling gang until we had all the space we needed and complete command of the position. The mob fell back a block away in every direction. Some stones were thrown, but none reached us. Then we got up the patrol wagons, made sudden dashes into the mob, gathered in man after man until we had the carts crammed three deep with cowed or cursing "toughs," but never a move was made to rescue them. Never another stone was thrown. Every time a platoon of horse started up either street, away would go the crowd full tilt; the big garden had not an occupant, and we had not had to pull trigger once. Finally the little command rode back through streets crammed with rioters an hour before and brought its cart-loads of "toughs" to the police station. That night in Chicago was the tragedy of the dynamite bomb in Haymarket with the slaughter of so many brave men, but when we got back from the garden we had the local leaders and the orators behind the bars, and our mob had played its last card.

All the same, the guard had to be kept up. The governor left for his hotel; the adjutant-general was suddenly called to the capitol, and Mr. X. was left supreme at head-quarters, and was ass enough to tell the worn-out telephonist he might go until morning. Not until this eventful night did he learn the real character of the telephone as an adjunct to military operations. He had had no sleep for thirty-six hours, and meant to get it now. Guards, sentries, pickets, and patrols were all provided for. The captain of the Light Horse moved in with him, and on a couple of cots they stretched themselves, boots, spurs, and all. Then it began,—

R-r-r-r-r-ring!

Up jumps Mr. X. and seizes the "ear trumpet."

"Hello!"

"Oh—all right. That's you, X. How're you all getting on?" comes back in the sonorous voice of the governor.

"All serene. Every man asleep except the guard."

"Well. A report has just come to me that Caldwell's command out at the car-shops——"

Plkt! Whr-r-r-r-r-r!

And the governor's firm tones are suddenly replaced by a shrill, distant, high-pitched feminine communication,—

"An' I just told her that I wouldn't stand it from her er any other——"

Mr. X. grasps the crank with indignant hand:

R-r-r-r-ring!

A voice, sweet and placid—feminine of course—responds,—

"Ye-es? What is it, Armory?"

"I was just receiving a very important message from the governor and was cut off in the midst of it."

"From whom?" still sweetly.

"From the governor."

"Ye-es? What governor?"

"Why, good Gbeg your pardon—the governor of the State, Governor R——. Find him right off."

"Where was he?"

"Don't know. Try the hotel."

"Who shall I say wants him?" sweeter yet.

"Colonel X., at the armory."

"*What* at the armory?"

"No matter!" (vehemently). "Just tell him the armory only got part of his message. I'll stay right here."

Presently the same sweet, placid voice,—

"All right, here's the governor."

Next, explosively, "And if you allow such a thing to occur again you'll never hear the last of it."

Mr. X. (aghast).—"Why, what in blazes has gone wrong, governor?"

"Good Lord! That you, X.? Thought I was still talking with those blankety idiots at the Central. Why, they've cut me off three times to-night in the midst of important matter——"

"Well,—pardon me,—but there's no telling how soon they'll do it again. What were you saying about Caldwell?"

"Great Scott! Didn't you get that? Why, I directed you to——"

"Armory! Armory! Are you through yet?" It's the sweet voice at the Central.

"Through! Not by a—(gulp)—good deal. Give me the governor again."

Three minutes anxious waiting. Then, sweet as before,—

"Armory, are you there? Oh! Well, the governor isn't there any more. He's gone away!"

Mr. X. makes a jump for his sabre, and the stalwart captain of the Light Horse tumbles out of his blanket with the query, "What's wrong?"

"Don't know. You stay here in charge. I've got to find the chief."

A cab whirls Mr. X. over to the hotel, and there he finds the governor, beaming. He is surrounded by prominent citizens congratulating him, and by reporters taking notes. He comes forward at once to greet his staff-officer.

"Did you get my message?"

"No, sir. It seemed impossible."

"Well, it's all right as it turned out. Some railway people hurried in to tell me the mob were firing their cars in the valley and that Caldwell was unable to prevent it, but the manager had his own telephone, and found out that there was nothing in it. The town's full of rumors."

"Then if there's nothing else, governor, I'll go back to my post."

"All comfortable up there?"

"Well, the men are, but I've a mind to take an ax and demolish that infernal telephone. I apprehend we're to have a lively night with it."

Back to the big armory. In the riding-hall and stables seventy horses, in the troop quarters sixty-five men, and in the battery-rooms as many; in the drill-hall and company-rooms nearly three hundred infantry, all peacefully resting from their labors. In the head-quarters office, the liveliest monologue, interspersed, like the conversation of old Mexican War Patten, with vivid blasphemy. It is the stalwart leader of the Light Horse who holds the floor—and the telephone.

"Here, take this thing!" he says, as X. enters. "Damned if I don't believe the Central has swapped with the lunatic asylum to-night. —Hey? What did you ask?" And again he addresses the conscienceless instrument. Pause, while Mr. X. throws off his sabre and gauntlets. "No! But you can just tell the manager that if we are cut off again to-night while important messages are coming or going, I'll be hanged if we don't send a guard over there and take possession ourselves. Now give us Bay View again. Here's Colonel X."

"What's wrong at Bay View, captain?" asks X., as he takes his station at the instrument.

"Why, they report firing. I couldn't make out where; and right in the midst of it some d—d newspaper chips in to know if we've got one of their reporters here as a prisoner. I had just time to say I'd find out right off, and if we had we'd hang him, when they were switched off and the commander at the Allis works asked if we had any information of a mob's coming that way and——"

"Hold on a moment," says X. "What is it, Central?"

"Oh! I beg pardon," the sweet voice again: "I thought this was the armory. Never mind."

"It *is* the armory," yells X., in desperation. "I've just got back."

But the sole reply is a distant "Whr-r-r-r-r-r-r—*Plck!*"

R-r-r-r-r-ring—r-ing—r-r-r-ing-ing, trolls the bell in response to vigorous twirling, and presently—that indomitably sweet voice,—

"Ye-es? That you, Armory? Thought you'd gone."

"Gone? We can't go! Now, for goodness' sake, give me Bay View—quick!"

"Bay View? Why they've been talking the last half-hour, and finally got disgusted because you wouldn't answer. I'll try what I can do."

A few moments' suspense; then, "Yes. Here they are."

"Hello, Bay View! What's the matter?"

"Why, Colonel X., we've been trying to get you the last twenty minutes. This is Major A., of the staff. The outposts and sentries towards town report heavy firing about the Allis works and——"

Plkt! "Armory! Here's somebody who must speak with you at once." (The sweet voice again.)

"Drive ahead," says X. all a-quiver. "It's the Allis works, no doubt, and they're attacked."

A shrill small voice: "Armory! *Armory!* Can't you answer? I've been trying to get you all night."

"Here we are; but for Heaven's sake be quick."

"Well—who is this?"

"Colonel X."

"Colonel who?"

"Colonel X."

"Well, I don't know whether you're the gentleman Mrs. Ferguson wanted to speak with or not. She's got company now down in the parlor. I'll run and see. Just you hold the line a——"

"*Hi!* Central!" shouts X. "Shut off that gabbling idiot and give me the Allis works—quick."

"Shut off *what?*" (sweetly). "Please speak a little lower and stand just a little farther back."

"Oh, never mind. Ring up the Allis works at once."

Presently the Allis works.

"Major, is everything all right. Have you had any trouble?"

"Nothing 'cept half a dozen toughs tried to set fire to the fence. We rounded up before they knew it. Another two tried to disarm one of my sentries. He knocked one of them silly with a 'butt to the front,' and the other's lying here with a——"

"Pardon me, but have you had an attack? any firing—any approach from a mob?"

"No such luck! I wish to goodness they would come."

Then for an hour brisk inquiries and answers to and from the various detached posts, only to find that there had been no firing, no aggressive move. Then midnight, and the post-commander finds himself worn out.

"Central!" he calls.

"Ye-es," sweetly.

"We are about used up now. Please give positive directions that except it be important military business we are not rung up again to-night."

"Very well. I'm tired too, and go home in five minutes; but I'll see you are not disturbed. *Good*-night."

And then Mr. X., played out, with a sigh of mingled weariness and relief, throws himself upon his bunk. The big captain rises, takes his sabre, and says,—

"Hope to goodness you can get a little rest now. I'm going out to look after my guards and outposts. Back in half an hour."

One more message presently routs Mr. X. out again. A high city official warns head-quarters that immense crowds have attended all the "indignation meetings" held throughout the city, and mean to assault the armory in the morning to release their prisoners. "They have dynamite."

"So have we—lot's of it. Good-night."

Finally drowsiness, oblivion—then, R-r-r-r-r-r-ing . . . r-r-ring! Loud, urgent, imperative. One bound takes Mr. X. to the telephone.

"Hello!"

"Oh, Armory! I'm so glad to get you at last." (The voice is feminine, but pleasant, motherly, benevolent.) "I tried to get you several times this evening, but when I could get the wire you were busy, and when you responded I had visitors whom I could not well leave." (Ah! Mrs. Ferguson herself at last.) "I wanted to inquire about Willy Simpson. His mother and I are old friends, and she telephoned me to say she *had* to leave town, and please to have a motherly eye over him in case of injury or trouble."

"No man of that name in this command has been wounded or injured in any way, madam."

"You're sure of that, are you. I couldn't go to bed without knowing, and my friends have just left me—but, who is this?"

"Colonel X., madam."

"Oh, yes. Well, you know Willy, of course."

"I regret to say I do not—personally. What does he belong to?"

"Indeed, I'm not sure; but its the military—the militia, you know. If Captain S—— were there, perhaps he could tell."

Enter at this instant Captain S—— from his tour of inspection, and X. gladly hands over the case to him.

"What can I do for you, Mrs. Ferguson. This is Captain S——," begins the one-sided colloquy.

"Willy Simpson, did you say? No, I don't know him. And you say you don't know what he belongs to?"

"Hm! Yes. We've got as many as five hundred. There's the Light Horse, the battery, and about six companies of infantry. I don't see how you *could* speak with him to-night."

"Oh, yes! He must be here; but you wouldn't ask me to wake every one of the five hundred up to inquire if he was Willy Simpson?"

"No, madam; I'll do it in the morning, but I cannot now. It is simply impossible."

"Very well, madam, good-night."

"See here, now, Central, that's enough of that sort of thing for one night,—and don't you forget it!"

Then, with a comical grin on his tired face, the captain turns to Mr. X.

"What do you suppose that blessed old lady routed us out at this hour for?"

"Mr. X. is at a loss to conjecture.

"She says she *must* write to 'Willy's' mother the first thing in the morning, and she wants to be able to tell her that the pies she sent him were safely received."

R-r-r-r-r-ing!

CHARLES KING,
Captain U.S.A.

SERVICE SALAD.

Readers of "The United Service" are cordially invited to contribute to this department items of either fact or fancy, grave or gay, instructive or only entertaining; in short, any literary flotsam and jetsam likely to interest our subscribers.

THE UNITED SERVICE prints the following letter with great pleasure:

"NORWICH, CT., Nov. 4, 1889.

"MAJOR WM. H. POWELL, U.S.A.:

"SIR,—I beg to express to you my deep sense of the service you have rendered to the country and to humanity by your suggestion in the article "Soldier or Granger?" So important a contribution towards the thorough and permanent solution of *all* the Indian questions I do not believe has been made in my time.

"I am convinced that the measure, boldly and thoroughly applied, would be of immense beneficence in many different aspects; and that it has only to be effectively and with *reiteration* set before the public to be universally popular. I have already written on the subject to several persons of influence in Indian affairs,—to Dr. Edward E. Hale, Dr. Lyman Abbott, and others,—asking their special attention to your article.

"I have the honor to be (in haste)

"Yours truly,

"LEON'D WOOLSEY BACON."

Major Powell's paper has attracted wide-spread attention, while of the most comments made, all are more or less favorable to the ideas he suggested.

Wrecking in the Bahama Islands.

I OMITTED to mention wrecking among the Bahama industries, yet it has its place, which is far from being an unimportant one. Men, women, and children will abandon any pursuit to throng to the scene of a wreck. An entire congregation will swarm out of church at such a summons, the men divesting themselves of superfluous clothing as they run, pitching garments over walls or into the bushes for the women to pick up. They are as active and prompt in their work, and as skillful, as the members of the New York Fire Department are in theirs. Nor does the labor require less nerve and skill. To take a boat out through a beating surf, in water which is not by any means free from sharks, and successfully save the cargo, rigging, and even the furniture, of a wrecked vessel, to say nothing of the human lives, is not work for a coward or an unskilled boatman. The pay for salvage is high, so that a "fat" wreck is a thing to be prayed for and long remembered.

Numberless stories are told of the facility with which the insular conscience reconciles itself to the idea of assisting to wreck a vessel. Rather a knotty case was that of one of the older pilots, who was suspected and tried several years ago for complicity in a crime of this nature. At the trial two points are said to have been proved by witnesses: First, that the pilot was in the cabin of the vessel one afternoon for some time, and that when he came out he was heard to say, piously, "Well, cap'n, if it *mus'* be so, de Lawd's will be done;" and, second, that the next morning the vessel was hard and fast ashore. The laborers appear to work with more intelligence and energy when on or in the sea. Salt water seems to be vivifying in its effect. Perhaps it is the unending, unyielding demand for activity in action and thought which the ocean always makes upon those who wrestle with it, that accounts for this difference in character. But it certainly is the case that the colored laborer of the Bahamas does not seem fonder of con-

CAPTAIN CHARLES KING, U.S.A.

It is an eminently appropriate thing that Captain King's likeness should appear in this magazine, for it was in its pages that he won his spurs as a writer of fiction,—his first novel, "The Colonel's Daughter," having appeared as a serial in the United Service. Before and since that appearance, however, he has often interested and amused our readers by his clever sketches of army life, especially in the "Trials of a Staff-Officer."

Captain King comes of a family distinguished in many ways. His great-grandfather, Rufus King, was one of the signers of the Constitution, and long a Senator from New York, and, in addition to these honors, was twice Minister to the Court of St. James, in the days when a Minister was selected for sagacity and ability, and had much responsibility. His grandfather, Charles King, was a well-known President of Columbia College, a scholar, and a gentleman. On his mother's side Captain King is descended from the learned and eccentric scholar, John Eliot, "the apostle to the Indians," a voluminous writer on theological subjects, whose grammar of the Indian tongue, and the translation of the Bible into the same, will always constitute his best memorial.

Coming down to a later period, we have General Rufus King, the father of the subject of our sketch,—a graduate of West Point, and for some time an officer of engineers, who resigned to take an editorial chair, and was for years widely known as the editor of that influential paper, the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. Mr. Lincoln appointed him Minister to Rome, and he was there for a few months after the breaking out of the Civil War; but his soldierly instinct was too strong to permit him to remain abroad when such stirring work was going on at home, and he threw up his appointment, re-entered the army, and commanded a division,—seeing considerable service. At a later period he was again accredited to the Papal States, and those of our naval officers who went out to Europe in the first squadron sent after the close of the war will remember the graceful hospitality dispensed by General King and his family at the Palazzo Buonaparte, in the days when the black horses and gorgeous liveries of the cardinals were to be seen in the Corso, and those princes of the church still took the air on the Pincian Hill before the winter sunset fell. Antonelli was then Papal prime minister, and it was at General King's that the writer first saw the celebrated politician and linguist.

But to return to the subject of our engraving. Some time ago a friend and brother officer of Captain King—Lieutenant Philip Reade, of the Third Infantry—wrote a biographical sketch of King for the number of *Lippincott's Magazine* in which appeared the story entitled "Dunraven Ranch." This sketch is so complete and satisfactory that we should like to transfer it bodily, did space permit. As it is, we can only make some extracts from it, with apology to both the subject and the writer for such a liberty.

Born in Milwaukee, he was sent to New York for his education, and had passed the examination to enter Columbia College just at the breaking out of the Civil War, when he was about sixteen. But, "within twenty-four hours after he had passed his examination, Charles King turned up in the camp of the Wisconsin volunteers at Washington, D. C., drumsticks in hand." As a little fellow he had been "marker" to the First Regiment of Wisconsin Militia, and a drummer in the Light Guard, and his first military duty at the Washington camp was to instruct the music boys; but when his father took command of the "Badger Brigade," he was made a mounted orderly at brigade headquarters. In this capacity he saw real soldiering, and was guide to General Hancock the first time that gallant soldier crossed the Potomac at the head of his brigade.

In June, 1862, he entered West Point, being appointed by Mr. Lincoln himself. Although not fond of the exact sciences, he still managed to be sufficiently proficient in that *sine qua non* for all cadets, while in all other respects he stood remarkably well, being cadet corporal in his second year, cadet first sergeant the next year, and cadet adjutant when a first classman. Under the rigid rule of West Point these cadet military honors mean much more than is given the ordinary civilian to understand.

King graduated number twenty-two in a class of forty-one members; and was, for some months after graduation, kept at West Point as artillery instructor.

For some years after leaving West Point, King served at New Orleans, attached to Light Battery "K," First Artillery, and was then attached to Light Battery "C," of the same regiment, at Fort Hamilton. He was then complimented by being selected as instructor in cavalry tactics, artillery tactics, and horsemanship, at the Military Academy,—a rare compliment, indeed, for an officer of his standing. In 1871 he was relieved in order to enable him to accept a staff position, and was then transferred from the artillery to the Fifth Cavalry, but did not join the regiment, then in Wyoming and Arizona, as he was acting as personal aide-de-camp to General Emory, and was also appointed acting judge-advocate of the Department of the Gulf. Here he was noted not only for conduct and discretion in those times of "carpet-baggers" and "reconstruction," but for his riding,—carrying off the prize at the International race, at the Metairie course. While in New Orleans, upon this tour of duty, he married, "spending a honeymoon of no little excitement, for the riots were in full blast in that winter of 1872-73, and the aide-de-camp had full share in all the service, being complimented by General Emory for coolness and gallantry"

Soon after this period, King's troop, "K," Fifth Cavalry, was in the field, with head-quarters at Camp Hualpai, Arizona, and thence moved to Camp Verde, "a region so infested with hostile Apaches that incessant service in the field was necessary for all our troops," and the young captain at once applied to go back to his regiment. In the ensuing campaign it earned the highest encomiums from both General Sherman and General Crook. In one of the engagements—that of Sunset Pass, in November, 1874—King was dangerously wounded, and only saved from falling into the hands of the savages by the devotion of Sergeant Bernard Taylor,—a devotion carried to the point of insubordination, for the latter refused to save himself, although ordered to do so, and held the howling Apaches in check until reinforcements arrived. Congress voted a special medal to Taylor, upon Captain King's official report that the brave sergeant had exposed himself to the certainty of torture and a horrible death by choosing to remain with him. For months Captain King was laid up with his sabre arm shattered, but before the wound was well healed he was again in the saddle, and shared in every fight and suffered all the terrible privations of the Fifth Cavalry during the Big Horn and Yellowstone expedition of 1876. During the next year the regiment saw hard duty on the Big Horn, from which it was hurried East on account of the great railroad riots. During this season of long and hard fighting King was among the keenest and most active of the campaigners, and the same may be said of 1868, another year of mountain scouting; but by this time the severe wound received from an Apache bullet had grown more troublesome. There was constant exfoliation and consequent drain upon his system, so that, at last, he was forced to ask to be sent before a retiring board. At his age, and with his prospects and genuine love of his profession, this was a hard blow.

Returning to Wisconsin, he served for a time as one of the faculty of the State University, and became an officer of the State National Guard.

He is now settled at Milwaukee, where, in his happy home on the bluff above the blue and dancing waters, and surrounded by his family, we may leave him with the hope that many additions to his literary fame, and to our enjoyment, may be forthcoming as the years roll round.

more or less poetic legends of its thoroughly anthropomorphic gods and godesses, and was, on that very account, less moral.

The Greeks were greatly edified by the importance given to religion at Rome, and by the way it was there practised. Sensible of those evils which had ruined their own country, they were the more impressed by the order and dignity of private life and the intense public patriotism of the Romans.

Accustomed to the many sensual disorders and superstitions of Greece, they were struck with admiration at an elaborate formalism which enchained life in bonds that were mainly salutary. They deemed the Roman religion much more moral than their own, and to it they attributed the comparative rarity of theft in that city. Jupiter's title was Greatest and Best, while Vesta was the goddess of purity, and many a divinity watched over the domestic hearth. In a word, the gods had, as it were, descended from Olympian heights to preside over the daily life of a nation of law-abiding citizens.

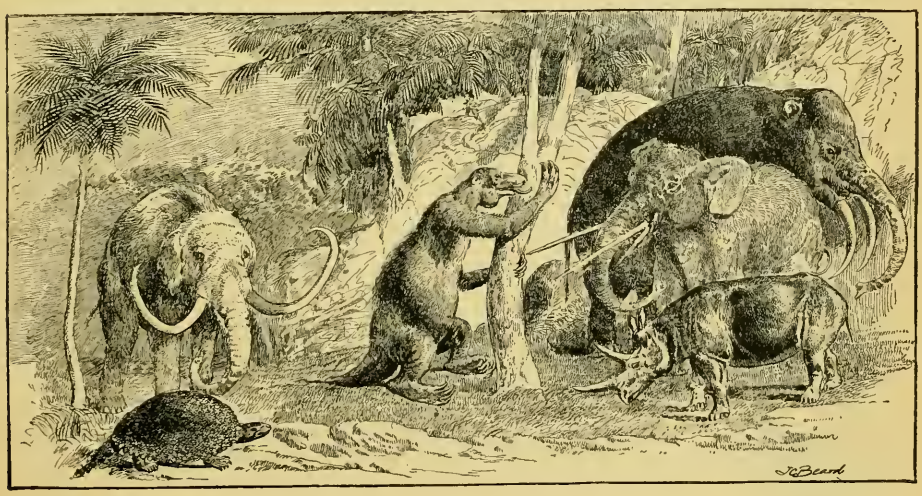
To the Greeks, the Roman religion appeared especially admirable on account of its prosaic character and the absence of those legends which, in modern eyes, form one of the charms of the religion of Hellas. When once the Greeks had lost the ancient naïve simplicity of their faith, those legends had become to them a source of embarrassment, giving rise as they did to the mockery of the profane, and a painful sense of incongruity on the part of the pious.

The Roman religion was free from such scandals. Great was the contrast between Jupiter and Zeus, while Virgil could boast that his native land had not been declared the theater of absurd marvels such as those of Grecian mythology.

"Hæc loca non tauri spirantibus naribus igneni
Invertêre, satis immanis dentibus Hydri;
Nec galeis densisque virûm seges horruit hastis."

It would be a great mistake to suppose that charity and alms-giving did not coexist with paganism in Rome, but this will be spoken of later, as also slavery, concerning which we will only now observe that the Roman religion was not hard on the slave. It did not close its temples against him nor exclude him from its feasts. It recognized that he had a soul and that his future fate did not differ from that of his master.

Such was the general character of the religion of ancient Rome; but it underwent various modifications between the conquest of Carthage and the age of the Antonines. Not only did it undergo internal changes through legislation and the development of ethics and philosophy, but it was greatly affected by the introduction of different forms of worship from the East. Our next effort will be to endeavor to point out some of its characteristics during the latter days of the Roman republic and the earlier days of the empire.



MISS ROYSTON'S GLOVES.

By Richard Henry Savage.

THERE is no pleasanter corner in America for a guest, than the reception-room of the officers' mess at West Point. Cosy chairs, a generous hospitality and a circle of charming fellows gather around the great mahogany table. It was there, on a summer evening, over a good cheroot and a bottle of prime mess claret, Major Hallett told me this story of Miss Royston's Gloves.

Said the major with a sigh and a pull at his glass: "Ah, my boy! The old days of the regency in Arizona. Good old days! I was a captain in Blake's Light Horse—the dear, steady old First cavalry! We had gone through the darkest early days of the territory, and in '67 and '68 I was stationed at Fort McDowell. Two infantry and two cavalry regiments held the territory. We had a Department Commander, and there was no railroad, no fuss and feathers, no worrying from Washington. Four companies of infantry and four troops of "Ours" gave us a good garrison, and from our mountain nest we scouted and harried the Hualpais, the Tonto Apaches, White Mountain Apaches and the Chiricahuas.

"Arizona was then a strange, sad land of blood and gold, great parched deserts, with gray sands sifted deep over the ruins of the beautiful work of the old Aztecs; gloomy gorges fanged with ledges of rock, whose shadows hid the red devils;

Richard Henry Savage, the author of My Official Wife, For Life and Love, and other romantic novels, was born in Utica, N. Y., in 1846. He was educated at West Point, graduating as lieutenant of engineers in 1868. Mr. Savage resigned from the army in 1872 after serving as aide-de-camp to General Thomas, and in various ports on the Pacific coast. Years of roving and travel as a railroad and practical engineer followed, including service in the Egyptian army with Gen. C. P. Stone, diplomatic duties under the U. S. State department, and later travels in China, Japan, Corea and Siberia. Until recently, Mr. Savage's literary work was chiefly confined to lectures and technical writing. For the past two years he has been a resident of New York city and in that time has published no less than seven popular novels, and now his writings are published simultaneously in the United States, Germany and England.

rolling, arid mesa, where the coyotes roamed at will, and tall cacti pointed from a hell on earth to a heaven above! Treeless, waterless, barren, and with a strange suggestiveness of a lost land, a land of abandoned hopes and forgotten histories. Heavy spinal ridges hid beyond their summits fathomless mysteries of danger and dark adventure.

"On the heights at night, baleful glittering Indian fires told us of the movements of our troops ere they left the reserve. Thornbush and mesquit groves hid the mean, stunted, shock-headed wretches, whose name is the synonym for craft, thirst of blood and devilish ingenuity. For many weary miles we skirmished over the old battle grounds, where for two hundred years the Apache had fought the mail-clad Spaniard, the daring Mexican, and had butchered in sad succession, peaceful Jesuit fathers, the weary emigrant and the lonely scout or mail-carrier.

"Thankless our task, indeed! The territory was peopled with the border refuse of the war, most of the old-timers had fallen under the hand of the Indian, and succumbed to private fray, or the unerring stroke of frontier whisky. A few hardy prospectors even then were hunting for the hidden treasures I have often galloped my troop over.

"Cut off from home, forgotten and isolated, I used to gaze at Montezuma's grand sleeping profile in the western mountains and sigh for the orders which would take us to the 'buffalo country.' Deserters, stragglers, bushwhackers, 'retired from the active exercise of their profession,' and wanderers with the red brand of Cain, were the usual loungers around the little adobe 'stations.'

"Weary trains, under heavy escort, dragged our supplies from Yuma. Save the Vulture mine at Wickenburg, and the dim traditions of the Mowry, lode mining was in its infancy! From our hill fort we could easily reach Date creek, Mohave, Prescott, Maricopa Wells, Camp Thomas and Tucson. Our 'Fort' was the usual squatty quadrangle of adobes, sheds and corrals, and little was there to exhibit the dignity of a great nation, but the fluttering war flag on the parade, and the stout-hearted, spirited garrison.

"Yes, it was a strange life! Still, there were a few ladies with us. It is one of the most charming and inconsequential features of the fair sex, that officers' wives will do and dare what can hardly be dreamed of. Unreasoning affection takes delicate women where their presence is often a desperate responsibility.

BANDMASTER HORNBLOWER.

"It was a relief, a blessing, and an unmerited privilege, to see a few pleasant faces, and some lovely ones, in that far-off stronghold in the old days. The service is sadly changed now, for there's not a spice of danger left to relieve its humdrum weariness. Danger there was enough and to spare then!

"Our gloomy post commander, 'Black Bill,' passed his lonely days in nursing his wrath, overpunishing the enlisted men, and systematically ignoring the pink and white lady commanders, who, awed by his distant manner, could only vainly urge 'Aiguellettes,' our handsome adjutant, not to detail popular married officers or their petted 'subs' on dangerous scouts! The serious duty, as usual, was done by two or three case-hardened captains, not of a society turn, and a dozen of as bright-hearted troop lieutenants as ever backed a bucking horse.

"Some of them were gay lads, fresh from cadet buttons and pipe-clay (some, alas! now sleeping where 'Boots and Saddles' will never wake their last slumbers); several, rejoicing in euphonious titles, such as 'Mad Burke,' 'Hard-Riding Hennessey,' 'Poker James,' and 'Whisky Reilly,' were legacies of our great war,—or, by dint of hard fighting and desperate pluck, with years of service in the ranks, had changed the chevron for the yellow shoulder-strap.

"We had one or two 'transfers' from the east, among them Arthur Snodgrass Jawkins, a long, placid youth from civil life, who had a thin neck, a watery eye, played the flute, and regularly fell off his horse at drill. Poor Jawkins was a little loose-jointed for the cavalry, but he died like a man, some years later, 'a *bad* rider, but a *good* fellow,' and his scalp is to be

credited to the yet unpaid account of Mr. Crazy Horse.

"Such were our surroundings. What was our daily life? Stables, drill, fatigue, the mess-room, chat, the stir of arriving trains, the mild excitement of the mail, dull poring over dog-eared novels, a little expensive poker, and much consumption of bad whisky at the sutler's. Those who did not go in for scouting, went in for mental dry-rot, or revolved aimlessly—poor, useless satellites—around the over-petted ladies of the post.

"As usual, we had the 'literary clique,' the 'swell family,' the 'gossip headquarters,' and the 'flirtation center' of our small world. The enlisted men were overworked at 'fatigue' and cordially hated the harsh post régime. Half were old soldiers, and the rest, the bad class of men who had drifted into the army after the war, and represented every description of unpunished crime, bounty-jumping, skulking, and all the usual moral looseness following a long period of hostility.

"It was on a pleasant afternoon in September, 1867, that Dick Grahame, my first lieutenant, a sterling young fellow, called out, gaily: 'By Jove, Captain, here's an ambulance and a lady!' This unexpected break in the monotony of our life was caused by the advent of Harold Royston, of New York, a wealthy backer of the local owners of the Vulture mine, who appeared, toil-worn and dusty, to claim our hospitality, on his weary way to Wickenburg.

"The thrill of excitement caused by the advent of Miss Agnes, his daughter, will never be forgotten at Fort McDowell. The father had vainly objected to his spirited child accompanying him on a long western journey. It was soon known that Miss Agnes would remain for some weeks with Mrs. Major Merrifield, while her sire pursued his business at the Vulture.

"Years have gone by; but I can yet recall Agnes Royston, as she stood next morning watching our guard mount. Our ambitious bandmaster, Hornblower, essayed 'Then You'll Remember Me,' during 'inspection of arms,' as a compliment to this bright and lovely bird of passage. Don't ask me to tell you of the graces of form and feature which set us all weaving bright romances, from trim Major Hatch, of the infantry—well-to-do and next for promotion,—up and down, to McSawbones, our Scotch surgeon, whose hair was the real vermilion dye, and whose accent was as broad as his shoulders!

"I'll say nothing about myself; but I've seen Dick Grahame take a rattling volley across a cañon more calmly than his introduction to the goddess. He was the new 'officer of the day' and was asked at once by the visitor why they "all marched around in such a funny way." Leaving Dick with his interesting military pupil, I will only say that in a week Agnes Royston had captured all our hearts. Her sunny face, dainty figure, and that polished, yet delicate elegance which distinguishes the New York girl, 'to the manner born,' were a revelation to some, and a reminiscence to others. She came upon us, a beautiful stranger, to recall a bright world, where 'Apaches,' 'sandstorms,' 'roughing it,' and 'frontier manners' were unknown. Croquet, riding parties under escort, music, and a round of ceremonial garrison 'teas' caused our social Sahara to blossom like a suddenly enriched oasis. She became a general favorite, and even visited the men's quarters, where her graceful presence was like a stray sunbeam.

ARTHUR SNODGRASS JAWKINS.

"It was known in two weeks that she had conquered even the irascible 'Black Bill,' who had condescended to release, at her majesty's request, 'Hard-Headed Sidney,' our most rebellious recruit, from ornamentally parading before a sentinel, with a fifty-pound mesquit log on his shoulders. Sidney, a raw-boned, defiant American castaway, looked with a

MISS ROYSTON'S ARRIVAL.

grateful flash in his cool, wicked eyes at this pretty, patrician girl, who begged an unasked boon for a stranger.

"Poor Dick Grahame! He messed with me. I had always liked the lad since I drilled him, a lithe, bright-eyed cadet, at the Point, and saw him take 'Rabb' over the pole-fence at Roe's hotel, in that particularly neat style of his, on his graduating ride. It was evident that Dick was hard hit, and his particular form of the mild lunacy called 'Love' was moping, smoking many pipes, and very shyly dropping his blue eyes, under the wavy brown hair, when the fair divinity asked him even the most trifling question. Still, I thought I recognized an unusually knowing knotting of the bunch of red neck ribbon which our troop affected, and a peculiarly careful grooming of his big roan charger 'Strideaway.'

"These dangerous symptoms were supplemented by the reckless wearing of his 'best blouse,' and certain literary researches in a well-thumbed volume of Lucile, which, I am ashamed to own was a gift of some soft-eyed, but absent charmer of his cadet days. Yet, with all these signs of imminent inflammation of the heart, I was not a little surprised to be officially addressed by him, one day, at troop drill, as 'Miss Agnes,' instead of the customary, though less romantic appellation of 'Captain'! I was obliged to gallop the troop around the parade to regain my official composure, and to sternly reprove Sergeant Mike Mulrain for 'losing distance with his platoon,' when that respectable Hibernian soldier's real crime was roaring in amazement, as he heard the words which paralyzed several files of the best troop (as I fondly imagined) in the service.

"And now you have my young friends in the circle of your acquaintance. Burning days gave way to glorious moonlight nights, when fun was rife, or dark evenings, when a doubled guard protected us from the deviltry of the Indians, who would sneak up almost to our sentinels' posts. If there is any spot on earth where a sweet stranger will receive the united devotion of all hearts, it is a frontier post —or, at least, it *was* in those now forgotten days.

"Time wore on, and Dick's infatuation proportionately increased, as the days of the stay of our 'one fair goddess' grew less, and painfully small to the many gallant suitors, whose readiness was characteristic of 'cavalry gallantry.' The infantry were by no means distanced by their mounted brethren, and the respectable 'staff' kept up a sly attack. Never did the different arms of the service meet 'on detached duty' with more praiseworthy zeal.

"There seems to be a fatality about nice girls—and occasionally heiresses—marrying in the service. I often wondered if lovely Agnes Royston would leave us and pass away forever, a bright memory, and be vainly regretted over our flowing cups. Fate ordained otherwise,—and it fell about in this manner:

"But two weeks remained of Miss Royston's visit, when the post was startled by the desertion of 'Hard-Headed Sidney,' whose genial company was not regretted as much as the loss of his horse, arms and accoutrements. He left us, one night, accompanied by 'McCarty the malingerer,' a sly and astute milesian shirk, who had shown, through several infantry enlistments, a great capacity for swallowing liquor and being duly court-martialled. McCarty's stories of the ante-bellum days kept his mess-squad in a roar, and often saved himself from the non-com.'s vengeance. It was, therefore, awkward

enough for Dick Grahame that he was ordered to take ten men, with two week's rations, and scout the mèsa and cañon toward Maricopa, and arrest these delinquents. Peculiarly awkward, as the grand ball given to Miss Agnes Royston was to dazzle us in a week.

"It was, indeed, hard; for had not Dick sent to distant San Diego for the prettiest pair of white gloves, with innumerable buttons, as a payment of a wager lost to our young 'Queen Bright Eyes' at croquet? The vivacious 'sub,' who would have gladly welcomed his dangerous detail at any other time, used words which would have curled the hair of a regulation chaplain, with holy horror. Some *other* fellow would have the first waltz; some *other* fellow would get the old regimental extra, 'The Blue Danube,' while our forlorn lover would be camping on the bleak, stony plains, and, uselessly perhaps, hunting two desperate rascals. Visions of *other* fellows pressing that pretty hand annoyed the love-lorn youth, who sadly mourned the loss of an opportunity to present his token and feel the loss of his wager richly repaid in fastening Miss Royston's gloves around those pretty blue-veined wrists. Well, Dick's grumbling had, perforce, an end, when his sergeant reported the detachment. Strideaway looked fit for a race for life, and, after galloping across and reporting departure, Dick came over and said good-by to me. 'All's for the best, dear boy,' said I, as I shook his hand, and gave him my commissions for Maricopa.

"It was a gloomy face which met mine as he rode away and sent his detachment down the road. For the first time since Dick joined, he was not at the head of his command, for he rode across the parade to where Mrs. Merrifield and her attendant ladies were gathered upon the major's porch. Poor Dick! The news of this sudden detail was not generally known, and our charming visitor was not at home. It was small solace to our hero to know of her riding out with Major Hatch in that particularly neat trap which was the envy of the opposing heroes who sported no team. Across the parade the gallant roan sped at the full run, as the despairing lover threw his hand up in a last salute to me, and I watched him sadly 'fall in' at the head of his little band, and the dark gorge swallowed them from my sight.

"JAWKINS KEPT US ALL AWAKE."

"Days passed, and I will pass over the 'grand ball.' It is yet chronicled in McDowell, how 'Black Bill' opened the ball with sweet Agnes Royston, and looked like the 'stern old Baron Rudiger' capturing a fairy; how the married ladies nearly died with envy; how our soon-departing friend had to laughingly retreat before our earnest pleadings for 'just one more turn;' of the grand culinary triumphs of the supper; of how the mess of the 'First' made Miss Agnes an honorary member; how McSawbones solemnly inserted a stately minuet in the Virginia reel, which closed this memorable ball. Memorable? Yes! For did we not all feel a sense of personal loss, as 'Home, Sweet Home' softly breathed to us of the dear, far-away home *she* was going back to, and from which we were yet to be exiled for years? Gentle, gracious, and lovely, the loss of her presence was a general calamity to us, and I felt complimented when the dear child said: 'Captain Hallett, as you don't dance, you shall see me home!'

"It was a silent walk across the dark parade; her dear little hand closed nervously on mine, and her sweet voice trembled, as she said: 'And you'll remember me most kindly to Lieutenant Grahame; and tell him not to forget he owes me a visit at New York on his leave.' The bright Arizona stars—the very brightest in the world—hung over us; but the brightness seemed all to go out with her as she left me. I thought sadly of my poor boy in his lonely camp, and of how often runs the course of true love in devious paths.

"It was with heavy hearts, best wishes, and much waving of handkerchiefs, that the little cor-

tege drew out of the fort, some days later. Mr. Royston had returned; the last farewells had been spoken. The travel-stained ambulance, packed with every comfort, drew away on the long road, stretching bleak and drear, to San Diego; the Roystons were to go to San Francisco, and thence home by rail. It was easy to see from the lowering brow of Major Hatch, and the dejected visage of McSawbones, that neither of them hoped to hear that sweet voice ever say, 'Auf Wiedersehen!' Dignity, coldness and reserve wrapped Harold Royston as an icy mantle; and that judicious parent congratulated himself on his departure, for he was thunderstruck at the royal sway of his bright girl over the whole garrison. He had no idea of becoming socially interested in the Army Register.

"Escorted by five stout cavalrymen, the ambulance rolled away, and we were left lamenting, while our bird of bright plumage left us, 'like Alexander, to spread her conquests further.' There was much stirrup-cup drinking that night, at mess. Jawkins kept us all awake with the melancholy 'tootle' of his flute, showing how hard hit his gentle nature was. McSawbones played chess, in a savage frame of mind, with Major Hatch, —he soon got angry, was beaten, and skulked off to bed. So passed away from us that bright presence, which made us all men of heart and feeling again, not sullen machines of every-day life, bored, and boring others more deeply yet.

"Down into the fastnesses of McDowell cañon went our little train, freighted with well-wishes, and what happened there shall be told in Dick Grahame's own words. He told it to me with certain additions, charming interpolations, and one or two pretty tear drops, and a sob now and then, from the sweetest woman in the world, who at that time was nursing a very good-looking young cavalry officer. She wore at her ivory throat a knot of saucy scarlet ribbon and a pair of pretty gold cross-sabers, with a figure '1,' as a mark of the regiment and troop she had determined to 'reinforce.'

"'You see, Hallett,' said Dick, 'I had scouted up and down the cañon and the mèsa. I went over to Salt river, and down as far as Maricopa. I looked along the Gila; found no one. After executing your commissions at Maricopa and getting forage, I started up into the back country, intending to strike the McDowell road half-way. I felt blue enough. I got those famous gloves at Maricopa. I slipped them in the breast-pocket of my blouse. I was rather 'cut up' when I thought of the ball and of 'somebody'—(here an interruption),—and I declared that if I got those two deserters, I'd tie them up for an hour or two, just for spite.

'Well, I struck their trail about forty miles from Maricopa, and followed it into the cañon. I knew at once, from their

'MISS AGNES.'

doubling, that they were out of water and had to make for Salt river. I pressed the trail and followed it quickly, as I wanted to catch them before they could hide on the other side of the river. We were winding down hill into the cañon, when we saw an ambulance and escort coming down the McDowell road. I jumped at the idea that I might, after all, say good-by. I pushed the men on and struck the road. Just then I heard sharp firing. I put the men at the run, for I knew that the red devils had attacked the escort. I could tell the crack of the cavalry carbine. My heart was in my mouth. I could hear the dropping fire of the Indians, when, suddenly, the regular ring of two heavy Springfields was added.

'By Jove, Hallett, when we got up, there was Sidney and old McCarty in the rocks,

"IT WAS A SILENT WALK ACROSS THE DARK PARADE."

practicing on the Indians, who had already killed Duffy, Stacy and Maloney. The deserters had seen the attack, pitched in like two heroes, and were 'standing them off.' I never shall forget Sidney—just as cool as if on parade; old McCarty, too, was 'the man for Galway.' Well, you know the team was upset and Mr. Royston wounded; and that's about all, for when we got up we finished the thing off quickly!' "

"'Now, that's *not* all!' said Somebody; 'for all I remember of that dreadful hurry and horrid five minutes is those two brave men helping us, and hearing the clatter of horses' feet. I saw Richard, like in a dream, on that darling old roan horse, come flying around the bend, and with his splendid fellows dash after these fearful Indians. I screamed to you, and you rode up like a flash, and then I saw you fall so heavily from your horse. When the sergeant said, 'It's all right, Miss,—it's all over,' there you were, lying in the road, and your breast was covered with blood. Some took care of my father, while I opened your coat; and I found in your breast-pocket this pair of gloves, with a gaping ball-hole in them.' And the beautiful brown eyes were filled with happy tears, as she showed us the package which had helped to keep an Indian bullet out of a loving and manly heart.

"Well, all stories must have an end. Dick's severe flesh wound healed quickly, for the Apache's ball had glanced. The presence of two soft brown eyes watching his sleep, and disturbing his waking hours, 'incited fever;' so said the great McSawbones, as he divided his attentions between Lieutenant Grahame's wound in the breast and Papa Royston's shattered arm. Poor McSawbones was under fire as he exercised his grim art; but he made ample amends for all the necessary pangs he caused, by his elegant and appropriate present of massy silverware at the wedding.

"After the grand ball, and this exciting ride for a dear one's life, the culminating glory of that never-to-be-forgotten year was the jolliest cavalry wedding in the world. The bride looked her very loveliest, as, in the old mess-hall, given cheerfully by the hand of her grateful, but polar parent, to my dear boy, she changed her rank from an honorary to an active member of the First cavalry mess. We were all in full dress. The band was proud of the applause bestowed upon their rendition of 'Then You'll Remember Me' (played at Dick's special request), to commemorate that first guard-mount. The married ladies—dear souls!—in the usual womanly sympathy with a wedding looked their very prettiest, and distributed their smiles upon the cavalry, infantry and fragmentary 'staff,' with judicious and friendly fervor. The hall was decked with banners, and the silken guidon of dear old 'E' troop had the post of honor, neatly tied up with its bridal favors of white satin. Even 'Black Bill' was amiable!

"The men all had a grand dinner, which was inspected by the wedding party, and the health of Agnes Royston was drunk by the gallant boys who rescued her from the fate, worse than death, which lurked in McDowell's cañon. The wedding supper was jolly to a degree, and Jawkins's speech, in proposing the health of the bride, was a marvel of classic diction. It was accompanied with much redness of his honest face. It was a proud day for the post, and when dear old Dick and his

darling left us and walked across the parade, under the sweet shining stars, to the pleasant quarters tendered them by Major Merrifield, our hearts went out with them in fervent prayers for a peace and happiness which, thank God, has been since realized.

"Shall I tell you of the ball which followed the reception—how Jawkins actually waltzed; how Black Bill complimented all the ladies in turn, with official impartiality; how McSawbones giddily threw himself into the wild mazes of the dance, and made several matrons' cheeks tingle with his flowery phrases; how, as we went home in the morning, the stars were sloping in the west, and a faint flush hinted of the sweet singing bugles of reveille; how it seemed as if an era of happiness had dawned upon McDowell? Everyone took on a more pleasant and brotherly feeling, for had we not the very best of reasons? A sweet and gracious womanly presence was added in that lovely bride, who passed part of her time petting her soon departing father, hovering over her wounded husband, and feeding a certain gallant roan charger more lump sugar than was good for him, out of the prettiest dimpled hand in the Territory.

"It is, indeed, true that a miracle occurred; for, when Sidney, the recalcitrant, and the wily McCarty, were tried for desertion, were they not acquitted by a vote, which was not intended to be a precedent in the service? By the way, that's the same sergeant Sidney, who saved Jimmy Hawkins's life on the Rosebud. He says Captain Grahame's lady chased the devil out of him with her smile.

"Ah, yes, you say it's strange that I never married. . . . Well," said the major, as he called for a petit cognac and lit a fresh cheroot, "find me another woman on God's footstool like Agnes Royston, and I might be tempted; but," added the major, with a sigh, "I think my godson, Philip Hallett Grahame, will fall heir to my small savings and my couple of old swords."

PROPOSING THE HEALTH OF THE BRIDE.

As I walked up to Roe's hotel after a cordial "Good-night!" from the major, I sorrowed for the tenderhearted and lonely man who stood there, stern and military, waving the friendly beacon of his cigar.

I said to the major, next day: "My dear friend, I don't see much in your little narrative about Miss Royston's gloves."

"Right you are, my dear boy; but, you see, the folded gloves stopped the Indian's ball and thus prevented a mortal wound. I did not tell you that sweet Agnes Royston wore that very pair at the cavalry wedding, and no one criticised a ball hole in the sleeve of one, nor a dark spot on the other, telling of the manly, headlong devotion of the gallant boy whose heart's blood tinged the purity of the dainty kid. . . . Still, you are right," said the major. "I rather dwelt a little too much on lovely Agnes Royston."

And he walked musingly away to his lonely quarters, to dream of the old days in distant Arizona.

A DANCER.

By Ernest McGaffey.

In the lamplight's glare she stood,
The dancer—the octoroon—
On a space of polished wood
With glittering sand-grains strewn;
And a rapid, rhythmic tune,
From the strings of a mandolin,
Leaped up through the air in viewless flight
And passed in a strident din.

Her eyes like a fawn's were dark,
But her hair was black as night,
And a diamond's bluish spark
From its masses darted bright;
While around her figure slight
Clung a web of lace she wore,
In curving lines of unhidden grace,
As she paused on the sanded floor.

Then the clashing music sprang
From the frets of the mandolin,
While the shadowy arches rang
With insistent echoes thin.
And there, as the spiders spin
Dim threads in a ring complete,
A labyrinthine wheel she wove
With the touch of her flying feet.

To the right she swayed—to the left,
Then swung in a circle round,
Fast weaving a changing weft
To the changing music's sound;
As light as a leaf unbound
From the grasp of its parent tree,
That falls and dips with the thistledown,
Afloat on a windy sea.

And wider the music spell
Swept on in jarring sound;
Advanced and rose and fell,
By gathering echoes crowned;
And the lights whirled round and round
O'er the woman dancing there,
With her Circe grace and passionate face,
And a diamond in her hair.

GENERAL PHILIP H. SHERIDAN

(From the last portrait taken.)

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FROM GRAVELOTTE TO SEDAN.

*By Philip H. Sheridan.**

AFTER I had for a year been commanding the Division of the Missouri, which embraced the entire Rocky Mountain region, I found it necessary to make an inspection of the military posts in northern Utah and Montana, in order by personal observation to inform myself of their location and needs, and at the same time become acquainted with the salient geographical and topographical features of that section of my division. Therefore in May, 1870, I started west by the Union Pacific Railroad, and on arriving at Corinne Station, the next beyond Ogden, took passage by stage-coach for Helena, the capital of Montana Territory. Helena is nearly five hundred miles north of Corinne, and under ordinary conditions the journey was, in those days, a most tiresome one. As the stage kept jogging on, day and night, there was little chance for sleep, and there being with me a sufficient number of staff officers to justify the proceeding, we chartered the "outfit," stipulating that we were to stop over one night on the road to get some rest. This rendered the journey more tolerable, and we arrived at Helena without extraordinary fatigue.

Before I left Chicago the newspapers were filled with rumors of impending war between Germany and France. I was anxious to observe the conflict, if it was to occur, but reports made one day concerning the beginning of hostilities would be contradicted the next, and it was not till I reached Helena that the despatches lost their doubtful character, and later became of so positive a nature as to make it certain that the two nations would fight. I therefore decided to cut short my tour of inspection, so that I could go abroad to witness the war, if the President would approve. Having received word from General Sherman that there would be no objection to my going to Europe, I began making arrangements to leave, securing passage by the steamship Scotia.

President Grant invited me to come to see him at Long Branch before I should sail, and during my brief visit there he asked which army I wished to accompany—the German or the French. I told him the German, for the reason that I thought more could be seen with the successful side, and that the indications pointed to the defeat of the French. My choice evidently pleased him greatly, as he had the utmost contempt for Louis Napoleon and had always denounced him as a usurper and a charlatan. Before we separated, the President gave me the following letter to the representatives of our government abroad, and with it I not only had no trouble in obtaining permission to go with the Germans, but was specially favored by being invited to accompany the headquarters of the King of Prussia:

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"LONG BRANCH, N. J.,
July 25, 1870.

"Lieutenant-General P. H. Sheridan, of the United States Army, is authorized to visit Europe, to return at his own pleasure, unless otherwise ordered. He is commended to the good offices of all representatives of this Government whom he may meet abroad.

"To citizens and representatives of other Governments I introduce General Sheridan as one of the most skilful, brave, and deserving soldiers developed by the great struggle through which the United States Government has just passed. Attention paid him will be duly appreciated by the country he has served so faithfully and efficiently. U. S. GRANT."

Word of my intended trip was cabled to Europe in the ordinary press despatches, and our Minister to France, Mr. Elihu B. Washburne, being an intimate friend of mine, and thinking that I might wish to attach myself to the French army, did me the favor to take preliminary steps for securing the necessary authority. He went so far as to broach the subject to the French Minister of War, but, in view of the informality of the request, and an unmistakable unwillingness to grant it being manifested, Mr. Washburne pursued the matter no further. I did not learn of this kindly interest in my behalf till after the capitulation of Paris, when Mr. Washburne told me what he had done of his own motion. Of course I thanked him gratefully, but even had he succeeded in getting the permission he sought, I should not have accompanied the French army.

I sailed from New York July 27th, one of my aides-de-camp, General James W. Forsyth, going with me. We reached Liverpool August 6th, and the next day visited the American Legation in London, where we saw all the officials except our Minister, Mr. Motley, who being absent was represented by Mr. Moran, the Secretary of the Legation. We left London August 9th for Brussels, where we were kindly cared for by the American Minister, Mr. Russell Jones, who the same evening saw us off to Germany. Because of the war we secured transportation only as far as Vera, and here we received information that the Prussian Minister of War had telegraphed to the Military Inspector of Railroads to take charge of us on our arrival at Cologne, and send us down to the headquarters of the Prussian Army, but the Inspector, for some unexplained reason, instead of doing this, sent us on to Berlin. Here our Minister, Mr. George Bancroft, met us with a telegram from the German Chancellor, Count Bismarck, saying we were expected to come direct to the King's headquarters; and we learned also that a despatch had been sent to the Prussian Minister at Brussels directing him to forward us from Cologne to the army instead of allowing us to go on to Berlin, but that we had reached and quit Brussels without the Minister's knowledge.

Shortly after we arrived in Berlin the Queen sent a messenger offering us an opportunity to pay our respects, and fixed an hour for the visit, which was to take place the next day; but as the tenor of the despatch Mr. Bancroft had received from Count Bismarck indicated that some important event which it was desired I should witness was about to happen at the theatre of war, our Minister got us excused from our visit of ceremony, and we started for the headquarters of the German army that evening—our stay in the Prussian capital having been somewhat less than a day.

Our train was a very long one, of over eighty cars, and though drawn by three locomotives its progress to Cologne was very slow and the journey most tedious. From Cologne we continued on by rail up the valley of the Rhine to Bingenbrück near Bingen, and thence across through Saarbrücken to Remilly, where we left the railway and rode in a hay-wagon to Pont-à-Mousson, arriving there August 17th, late in the afternoon. This little city had been ceded to France at the Peace of Westphalia, and although originally German, the people had become, in the lapse of so many years, intensely French in sentiment. The town was so full of officers and men belonging to the German army that it was difficult to get lodgings, but after some

A Fusilier Regiment in Action near Gravelotte. (From Emil Hünten's painting.)

delay we found quite comfortable quarters at one of the small hotels, and presently, after we had succeeded in getting a slender meal, I sent my card to Count von Bismarck, the Chancellor of the North German Confederation, who soon responded by appointing an hour—about nine o'clock the same evening—for an interview.

When the Count received me he was clothed in the undress uniform of the cuirassier regiment of which he was the colonel. During the interview which ensued, he exhibited at times deep anxiety regarding the conflict now imminent, for it was the night before the battle of Gravelotte, but his conversation was mostly devoted to the state of public sentiment in America, about which he seemed much concerned, inquiring repeatedly as to which side—France or Prussia—was charged with bringing on the war. Expressing a desire to witness the battle which was expected to occur the next day, and remarking that I had not had sufficient time to provide the necessary transportation, he told me to be ready at four o'clock in the morning and he would take me out in his own carriage and present me to the King, adding that he would ask one of his own staff officers, who he knew had one or two extra horses, to lend me one. As I did not know just what my status would be, and having explained to the President before leaving America that I wished to accompany the German army unofficially, I hardly knew whether to appear in uniform or not, so I spoke of this matter, too, and the Count, after some reflection, thought it best for me to wear my undress uniform, minus the sword, however, because I was a non-combatant.

At four o'clock the next morning, the 18th, I repaired to the Chancellor's quarters. The carriage was at the door, also the saddle-horse, but as no spare mount could be procured for General Forsyth he had to seek other means to reach the battlefield. The carriage was an open one with two double seats, and in front a single one for a messenger; it had also a hand-brake attached. Count Bismarck and I occupied the rear seat, and Count Bismarck-Bohlen—the nephew and aide-de-camp to the Chancellor—and Doctor Busch were seated facing us. The conveyance was strong, serviceable, and comfortable, but not specially prepossessing, and hitched to it were four stout horses, logy, ungainly animals, whose clumsy harness indicated that the whole equipment was meant for heavy work. Two postilions in uniform, in high military saddles on the nigh horse of each span, completed the establishment.

All being ready we took one of the roads from Pont-à-Mousson to Rézonville, which is on the direct road from Metz to Châlons, and near the central point of the field where, on the 16th of August, the battle of Mars-la-Tour had been fought. It was by this road that the Pomeranians, numbering about 30,000 men, had been ordered to march to Gravelotte, and after proceeding a short distance we overtook the column. As this contingent came from Count Bismarck's own section of Germany, there greeted us as we passed along, first in the dim light of the morning and later in the glow of the rising sun, continuous and most enthusiastic cheering for the German Chancellor.

On the way Count Bismarck again recurred to the state of public opinion in America with reference to the war. He also talked much about our form of government, and said that in early life his tendencies were all toward republicanism, but that family influence had overcome his preferences, and intimated that after adopting a political career he found that Germany was not sufficiently advanced for republicanism. He said further that he had been reluctant to enter upon this public career, that he had always longed to be a soldier, but that here again family opposition had turned him from the field of his choice into the sphere of diplomacy.

Not far from Mars-la-Tour we alighted, and in a little while an aide-de-camp was introduced, who informed me that he was there to conduct and present me to his Majesty, the King of Prussia. As we were walking along together, I inquired whether at the meeting I should remove my cap, and he said no, that in an out-of-door presentation it was not etiquette to uncover, if in uniform. We

Action Near Sedan. (From a painting by Franz Adam.)

From Steffeck's portrait of King William of Prussia.

were soon in presence of the King, where—under the shade of a clump of second-growth poplar trees, with which nearly all the farms in the north of France are here and there dotted—the presentation was made in the simplest and most agreeable manner.

His Majesty, taking my hand in both of his, gave me a thorough welcome, expressing, like Count Bismarck, though through an interpreter, much interest as to the sentiment in my own country about the war. At this time William the First of Prussia was seventy-three years of age, and, dressed in the uniform of the Guards, he seemed to be the very ideal soldier, and graced with most gentle and courteous manners. The conversation, which was brief, as neither of us spoke the other's native tongue, concluded by his Majesty's requesting me, in the most cordial way, to accompany his headquarters during the campaign. Thanking him for his kindness, I rejoined Count Bismarck's party, and our horses having arrived meantime, we mounted and moved off to the position selected for the King to witness the opening of the battle.

This place was on some high ground overlooking the villages of Rézonville and Gravelotte, about the centre of the battlefield of Mars-la Tour, and from it most of the country to the east towards Metz could also be seen. The point chosen was an excellent one for the purpose, though in one respect disagreeable, since the dead bodies of many of the poor fellows killed there two days before were yet unburied. In a little while the King's escort began to remove these dead, however, bearing them away on stretchers improvised with their rifles, and the spot thus cleared was much more acceptable. Then, when such unexploded shells as were lying around loose had been cautiously carried away, the King, his brother Prince Frederick Charles Alexander, the Chief of Staff General von Moltke, the Minister of War General von Roon, and Count von Bismarck assembled on the highest point, and I being asked to join the group was there presented to General von Moltke. He spoke our language fluently, and Bismarck having left the party for a time, to go to a neighboring house to see his son, who had been wounded at Mars-la-Tour, and about whom he was naturally very anxious, General von Moltke entertained me by explaining the positions of the different corps, the nature and object of their movement then taking place, and so on.

Before us and covering Metz lay the French army, posted on the crest of a ridge extending north and about its centre curving slightly westward toward the German forces. The left of the French position was but a short distance from the Moselle, and this part of the line was separated from the Germans by a ravine, the slopes, fairly well wooded, rising quite sharply; further north, near the centre, this depression disappeared, merged in the general swell of the ground, and thence on towards the right the ground over which an approach to the French line must be made was essentially a natural open glacis, that could be thoroughly swept by the fire of the defenders.

The line extended some seven or eight miles. To attack this position, formidable everywhere, except perhaps on the right flank, the Germans were bringing up the combined forces of the First and Second Armies, troops that within the past fortnight had already successfully met the French in three pitched battles. On the right was the First Army, under the command of General von Steinmetz, the victors, August 6th, of Spicheren, near Saar, and, eight days later, of Colombey, to the east of Metz; while the centre and left were composed of the several corps of the Second Army, commanded by Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia, a part of whose troops had just been engaged in the sanguinary battle of Mars-la-Tour, by which Bazaine was cut off from the Verdun road and forced back towards Metz.

At first the German plan was simply to threaten with their right while the corps of the Second Army advanced toward the north to prevent the French, of whose intentions there was much doubt, from escaping towards Châlons; then, as the purposes of the French might be developed, these corps were to change direction towards the enemy successively, and seek to turn his right

flank. But the location of this vital turning-point was very uncertain, and until it was ascertained and carried, late in the afternoon, the action raged with more or less intensity along the entire line.

But as it is not my purpose to describe in detail the battle of Gravelotte, nor any other, I will speak of some of its incidents merely. About noon, after many preliminary skirmishes, the action was begun according to the plan I have already outlined, the Germans advancing their left while holding on strongly with their right, and it was this latter wing (the First Army) that came under my observation from the place where the King's headquarters were located. From here we could see, as I have said, the village of Gravelotte. Before it lay the German troops, concealed to some extent, especially to the left, by clumps of timber here and there. Immediately in front of us, however, the ground was open, and the day being clear and sunny with a fresh breeze blowing (else the smoke from a battle between four hundred thousand men would have obstructed the view altogether), the spectacle presented was of unsurpassed magnificence and sublimity. The German artillery opened the battle, and while the air was filled with shot and shell from hundreds of guns along their entire line the German centre and left, in rather open order, moved out to the attack, and as they went forward, the reserves, in close column, took up positions within supporting distances, yet far enough back to be out of range.

The French artillery and mitrailleuses responded vigorously to the Krupps, and with deadly effect, but as far as we could see the German left continued its advance, and staff-officers came up frequently to report that all was going on well at points hidden from our view. These reports were always made to the King first, and whenever anybody arrived with tidings of the fight we clustered around to hear the news, General von Moltke unfolding a map meanwhile and explaining the situation. This done, the Chief of the Staff, while awaiting the next report, would either return to a seat that had been made for him with some knapsacks, or would occupy the time walking about, kicking clods of dirt or small stones here and there, his hands clasped behind his back, his face pale and thoughtful. He was then nearly seventy years old, but because of his emaciated figure, the deep wrinkles in his face, and crow's-feet about his eyes, he looked even older, his appearance being suggestive of the practice of church asceticisms rather than of his well-known ardent devotion to the military profession.

By the middle of the afternoon the steady progress of the German left and centre had driven the French from their more advanced positions, from behind stone walls and hedges, through valleys and hamlets, in the direction of Metz, but as yet the German right had accomplished little except to get possession of the village of Gravelotte, forcing the French across the deep ravine I have mentioned, which runs north and south a little distance east of the town.

But it was now time for the German right to move in earnest to carry the Rozerieulles ridge, on which crest the French had evidently decided to make an obstinate fight to cover their withdrawal to Metz. As the Germans moved to the attack here, the French fire became heavy and destructive, so much so indeed as to cause General von Steinmetz to order some cavalry belonging to the right wing to make a charge. Crossing the ravine before described, this body of horse swept up the slope beyond, the front ranks urged forward by the momentum from behind. The French were posted along a sunken road, behind stone walls and houses, and as the German cavalry neared these obstructions it received a dreadful fire without the least chance of returning it, though still pushed on till the front ranks were crowded into the deep cut of the road. Here the slaughter was terrible, for the horsemen could make no further headway; and because of the blockade behind of dead and wounded men and animals an orderly retreat was impossible and disaster inevitable.

About the time the charge was ordered the phase of the battle was such that the King concluded to move his headquarters into the village of Gravelotte; and just after getting there we first learned

fully of the disastrous result of the charge which had been entered upon with such spirit; and so much indignation was expressed against Steinmetz, who, it was claimed, had made an unnecessary sacrifice of his cavalry, that I thought he would be relieved on the spot, though this was not done.

Followed by a large staff, General Steinmetz appeared in the village presently, and approached the King. When near, he bowed with great respect, and I then saw that he was a very old man, though his soldierly figure, bronzed face, and short-cropped hair gave some evidence of vigor still. When the King spoke to him I was not close enough to learn what was said; but his Majesty's manner was expressive of kindly feeling, and the fact that in a few moments the veteran general returned to the command of his troops indicated that, for the present at least, his fault had been overlooked.

The King then moved out of the village, and just a little to the east and north of it the headquarters were located on high, open ground, whence we could observe the right of the German infantry advancing up the eastern face of the ravine. The advance, though slow and irregular, resulted in gradually gaining ground, the French resisting stoutly, with a stubborn musketry fire all along the slopes. Their artillery was silent, however; and from this fact the German artillery officers grew jubilant, confidently asserting that their Krupp guns had dismounted the French batteries and knocked their mitrailleuses to pieces. I did not indulge in this confidence, however, for with the excellent field-glass I had, I could distinctly see long columns of French troops moving to their right for the apparent purpose of making a vigorous fight on that flank; and I thought it more than likely that their artillery would be heard from before the Germans could gain the coveted ridge.

The Germans labored up the glacis slowly at the most exposed places, now crawling on their bellies, now creeping on hands and knees, but in the main moving with erect and steady bearing. As they approached within short range they suddenly found that the French artillery and mitrailleuses had by no means been silenced, about two hundred pieces opening on them with fearful effect, while at the same time the whole crest blazed with a deadly fire from the Chassepôt rifles. Resistance like this was so unexpected by the Germans that it dismayed them, and first wavering a moment, then becoming panic-stricken, they broke and fled, infantry, cavalry, and artillery coming down the slope without any pretence of formation, the French hotly following and pouring in a heavy and constant fire as the fugitives fled back across the ravine toward Gravelotte. With this the battle on the right had now assumed a most serious aspect, and the indications were that the French would attack the heights of Gravelotte; but the Pomeranian Corps coming on the field at this crisis was led into action by von Moltke himself, and shortly after the day was decided in favor of the Germans.

When the French guns opened fire, it was discovered that the King's position was within easy range, many of the shells falling near enough to make the place extremely uncomfortable; so it was suggested that he go to a less exposed point. At first he refused to listen to this wise counsel, but yielded finally—leaving the ground with reluctance, however—and went back toward Rézonville. I waited for Count Bismarck, who did not go immediately with the King, but remained at Gravelotte looking after some of the escort who had been wounded. When he had arranged for their care we set out to rejoin the King, and before going far overtook his Majesty, who had stopped on the Châlons road and was surrounded by a throng of fugitives, whom he was berating in German so energetic as to remind me forcibly of the "Dutch" swearing that I used to hear in my boyhood in Ohio. The dressing down finished to his satisfaction, the King resumed his course toward Rézonville, halting, however, to rebuke in the same emphatic style every group of runaways he overtook.

Passing through Rézonville we halted just beyond the village; there a fire was built, and the King, his brother Prince Frederick Charles, and von Roon were provided with rather uncomfortable

"His Majesty was surrounded by a throng of fugitives, whom he was berating."

seats about it, made by resting the ends of a short ladder on a couple of boxes. With much anxiety and not a little depression of spirits news from the battle-field was now awaited, but the suspense did not last long, for presently came the cheering intelligence that the French were retiring, being forced back by the Pomeranian Corps and some of the lately broken right wing organizations that had been rallied on the heights of Gravelotte. The lost ground being thus regained, and the French having been beaten on their right, it was not long till word came that Bazaine's army was falling back to Metz, leaving the entire battle-field in possession of the Germans.

During the excitement of the day I had not much felt the want of either food or water, but now that all was over I was nearly exhausted, having had neither since early morning. Indeed all of the party were in like straits ; the immense armies had not only eaten up nearly everything in the country, but had drunk all the wells dry, too, and there seemed no relief for us till, luckily, a squad of soldiers came along the road with a small cask of wine in a cart. One of the staff officers instantly appropriated the keg and proceeded to share his prize most generously. Never had I tasted anything so refreshing and delicious, but as the wine was the ordinary sour stuff drunk by the peasantry of northern France, my appreciation must be ascribed to my famished condition rather than to any virtues of the beverage itself.

After I had thus quenched my thirst the King's brother called me aside, and drawing from his coat-tail pocket a piece of stale black bread divided it with me, and while munching on this the Prince began talking of his son—General Prince Frederick Charles, popularly called the Red Prince—who was in command of the Second Army in this battle, the German left wing. In recounting his son's professional career the old man's face was aglow with enthusiasm, and not without good cause, for in the war between Prussia and Aus-

tria in 1866, as well as in the present campaign, the Red Prince had displayed the highest order of military genius.

The headquarters now became the scene of much bustle, despatches announcing the victory being sent in all directions. The first one transmitted was to the Queen, the King directing Count Bismarck to prepare it for his signature ; then followed others of a more official character, and while these matters were being attended to I thought I would ride into the village to find, if possible, some water for my horse. Just as I entered the chief street, however, I was suddenly halted by a squad of soldiers, who, taking me for a French officer (my coat and forage cap resembling those of the French), levelled their pieces at me. They were greatly excited, so much so indeed that I thought my hour had come, for they could not understand English, and I could not speak German, and dared not utter explanations in French. Fortunately a few disconnected German words came to me in the emergency. With these I managed to delay my execution, and one of the party ventured to come up to examine the "suspect" more closely. The first thing he did was to take off my cap, and looking it over carefully his eyes rested on the three stars above the visor, and pointing to them he emphatically pronounced me French. Then of course they all became excited again, more so than before even, for they thought I was trying to practise a ruse, and I question whether I should have lived to recount the adventure had not an officer belonging to the King's headquarters been passing by just then, when, hearing the threatenings and imprecations, he rode up to learn the cause of the hubbub and immediately recognized and released me. When he told my wrathy captors who I was, they were much mortified, of course, and made the most profuse, apologies, promising that no such mistake should occur again, and so on ; but not feeling wholly reassured, for my uniform was still liable to mislead, I was careful to return to headquarters in company with my deliverer. There I related what had occurred, and after a good laugh all round, the King provided me with a pass which he said would preclude any such mishap in the future and would also permit me to go wherever I pleased—a favor rarely bestowed.

While I was absent as just related, it had been decided that the King's quarters should be established for the night in the village of Rézonville, and as it would be very difficult, at such a late hour, to billet the whole party regularly, Count Bismarck and I went off to look for shelter for ourselves. Remembering that I had seen, when seeking to water my horse, a partly burned barn with some fresh-looking hay in it, I suggested that we lodge there. He, too, thought it would answer our purpose, but on reaching it we found the unburned part of the barn filled with wounded, and this necessitating a further search we continued on through the village in quest of some house not yet converted into a hospital. Such, however, seemed impossible to come upon, so at last the Count fixed on one whose upper floor, we learned, was unoccupied, though the lower one was covered with wounded.

Mounting a creaky ladder—there was no stairway—to the upper story, we found a good-sized room with three large beds, one of which the Chancellor assigned to the Duke of Mecklenburg and aide, and another to Count Bismarck-Bohlen and me, reserving the remaining one for himself. Each bed, as is common in Germany and northern France, was provided with a feather tick ; but the night being warm these spreads were thrown off, and discovering that they would make a comfortable shake-down on the floor, I slept there, leaving Bismarck-Bohlen unembarrassed by companionship—at least of a human kind.

At daylight I awoke, and seeing that Count Bismarck was already dressed and about to go down the ladder, I felt obliged to follow his example, so I, too, turned out and shortly descended to the ground floor, the only delays of the toilet being those incident to dressing, for there were no conveniences for morning ablutions. Just outside the door I met the Count, who, proudly exhibiting a couple of eggs he had bought from the woman of the house, invited me to breakfast with him, provided we could

beg some coffee from the King's escort. Putting the eggs under my charge with many injunctions as to their safe-keeping, he went off to forage for the coffee, and presently returned, having been moderately successful. One egg apiece was hardly enough, however, to appease the craving of two strong men ravenous from long fasting. Indeed it seemed only to whet the appetite, and we both set out on an eager expedition for more food. Before going far I had the good luck to meet a sutler's wagon, and though its stock was about all sold, there was still left four large Bologna sausages, which I promptly purchased—paying a round sum for them, too—and hastening back found the Count already returned, though without bringing anything at all to eat; but he had secured a couple of bottles of brandy, and with a little of this—it was excellent, too—and the sausages, the slim ration of eggs and coffee was amply reinforced.

Breakfast over, the Chancellor invited me to accompany him in a ride to the battle-field, and I gladly accepted, as I very much desired to pass over the ground in front of Gravelotte, particularly so to see whether the Krupp guns had really done the execution that was claimed for them by the German artillery officers. Going directly through the village of Gravelotte, following the causeway over which the German cavalry had passed to make its courageous but futile charge, we soon reached the ground where the fighting had been the most severe. Here the field was literally covered with evidences of the terrible strife, the dead and wounded strewn thick on every side.

In the sunken road the carnage had been awful, men and horses having been slaughtered there by hundreds, helpless before the murderous fire delivered from behind a high stone wall impracticable to mounted troops. The sight was sickening to an extreme, and we were not slow to direct our course elsewhere, going up the glacis toward the French line, the open ground over which we crossed being covered with thousands of helmets that had been thrown off by the Germans during the fight and were still dotting the field, though details of soldiers from the organizations which had been engaged here were about to begin to gather up their abandoned headgear.

When we got inside the French works I was astonished to observe how little harm had been done the defences by the German artillery, for although I had not that serene faith in the effectiveness of their guns held by German artillerists generally, yet I thought their terrific cannonade must have left marked results. All I could perceive, however, was a disabled gun, a broken mitrailleuse, and two badly damaged caissons. Everything else except a little ammunition in the trenches had been carried away, and it was plain to see from the good shape in which the French left wing had retired to Metz that its retreat had been predetermined by the disasters to the right wing.

By this hour the German cavalry having been thrown out to the front well over toward Metz, we, following it to get a look at the city, rode to a neighboring summit, supposing it would be a safe point of observation; but we shortly realized the contrary, for scarcely had we reached the crest when some of the French pickets, lying concealed about six hundred yards off, opened fire, making it so very hot for us that, hugging the necks of our horses, we incontinently fled. Observing what had taken place, a troop of German cavalry charged the French outpost and drove it far enough away to make safe our return, and we resumed possession of the point, but only to discover that the country to the east was so broken and hilly that no satisfactory view of Metz could be had.

Returning to Gravelotte we next visited that part of the battle-field to the northeast of the village, and before long Count Bismarck discovered in a remote place about twenty men dreadfully wounded. These poor fellows had had no attention whatever, having been overlooked by the hospital corps, and their condition was most pitiful. Yet there was one very handsome man in the group—a captain of artillery—who, though shot through the right breast, was talkative and cheerful, and felt sure of getting well. Pointing, however, to a comrade lying near, also shot in the breast, he significantly shook his head;

it was easy to see on this man's face the signs of fast approaching death.

An orderly was at once despatched for a surgeon, Bismarck and I doing what we could meanwhile to alleviate the intense sufferings of the maimed men, bringing them water and administering a little brandy, for the Count still had with him some of the morning's supply. When the surgeons came we transferred the wounded to their care, and making our way to Rézonville, there took the Count's carriage to rejoin the King's headquarters, which in the meantime had been moved to Pont-à-Mousson. Our route led through the village of Gorze, and here we found the streets so obstructed with wagons that I feared it would take us the rest of the day to get through, for the teamsters would not pay the slightest heed to the cries of our postilions. The Count was equal to the emergency, however, for, taking a pistol from behind his cushion and bidding me keep my seat, he jumped out and quickly began to clear the street effectively, ordering wagons to the right and left. Marching in front of the carriage and making way for us till we were well through the blockade, he then resumed his seat, remarking: "This is not a very dignified business for the Chancellor of the German Confederation, but it's the only way to get through."

At Pont-à-Mousson I was rejoined by my aide, General Forsyth, and for the next two days our attention was almost wholly devoted to securing means of transportation. This was most difficult to obtain, but as I did not wish to impose on the kindness of the Chancellor longer, we persevered till finally, with the help of Count Bismarck-Bohlen, we managed to get tolerably well equipped with a saddle-horse apiece and a two-horse carriage. Here, also, on the afternoon of August 21st, I had the pleasure of dining with the King. The dinner was a simple one, consisting of soup, a joint, and two or three vegetables; the wines, *vin ordinaire* and Burgundy. There were a good many persons of high rank present, none of whom spoke English, however, except Bismarck, who sat next the King and acted as interpreter when his Majesty conversed with me. Little was said of the events taking place around us, but the King made many inquiries concerning the war of the Rebellion, particularly with reference to Grant's campaign at Vicksburg, suggested perhaps by the fact that there, and in the recent movements of the German army, had been applied many similar principles of military science.

The French army under Marshal Bazaine having retired into the fortifications of Metz, that stronghold was speedily invested by Prince Frederick Charles. Meantime the Third Army, under the Crown Prince of Prussia—which, after having fought and won the battle of Wörth, had been observing the army of Marshal MacMahon during and after the battle of Gravelotte—was moving toward Paris by way of Nancy, in conjunction with an army called the Fourth which had been organized from the troops previously engaged around Metz, and on the 22d was directed toward Bar-le-Duc, under the command of the Crown Prince of Saxony. In consequence of these operations the King decided to move to Commercy, which place we reached by carriage, travelling on a broad macadamized road, lined on both sides with poplar trees, and our course leading through a most beautiful country thickly dotted with prosperous-looking villages.

On reaching Commercy, Forsyth and I found that quarters had already been selected for us, and our names written on the door with chalk, the quartermaster charged with the billeting of the officers at headquarters having started out in advance to perform this duty and make all needful preparations for the King before he arrived, which course was usually pursued thereafter, whenever the royal headquarters took up a new location.

Forsyth and I were lodged with the notary of the village, who over and over again referred to his good fortune in not having to entertain any of the Germans. He treated us most hospitably, and next morning on departing we offered compensation by tendering a sum —about what our bill would have been at a good hotel—to be used for the "benefit of the wounded or the Church." Under this stipulation the notary ac-

cepted, and we followed that plan of paying for food and lodging afterward, whenever quartered in private houses.

The next day I set out in advance of the headquarters and reached Bar-le-Duc about noon, passing on the way the Bavarian contingent of the Crown Prince's army. These Bavarians were trim-looking soldiers, dressed in neat uniforms of light blue; they looked healthy and strong, but seemed of shorter stature than the North Germans I had seen in the armies of Prince Frederick Charles and General von Steinmetz. When, later in the day, the King arrived, a guard for him was detailed from this Bavarian contingent, a stroke of policy no doubt, for the South Germans were so prejudiced against their brothers of the North that no occasion to smooth them down was permitted to go unimproved.

Bar-le-Duc, which had then a population of about fifteen thousand, is one of the prettiest towns I saw in France, its quaint and ancient buildings and beautiful boulevards charming the eye as well as exciting deep interest. The King and his immediate suite were quartered on one of the best boulevards in a large building—the Bank of France—the balcony of which offered a fine opportunity to observe a part of the army of the Crown Prince the next day on its march toward Vitry. This was the first time his Majesty had had a chance to see any of these troops—as hitherto he had accompanied either the army of Prince Frederick Charles or that of General Steinmetz—and the cheers with which he was greeted by the Bavarians left no room for doubting their loyalty to the Confederation, notwithstanding ancient jealousies.

While the troops were passing, Count Bismarck had the kindness to point out to me the different organizations, giving scraps of their history and also speaking concerning the qualifications of the different generals commanding them. When the review was over we went to the Count's house and there, for the first time in my life, I tasted kirschwasser, a very strong liquor distilled from cherries. Not knowing anything about the stuff, I had to depend on Bismarck's recommendation, and he proclaiming it fine I took quite a generous drink, which nearly strangled me and brought on a violent fit of coughing. The Chancellor said, however, that this was in no way due to the liquor, but to my own inexperience, and I was bound to believe the distinguished statesman, for he proved his words by swallowing a goodly dose with an undisturbed and even beaming expression of countenance, demonstrating his assertion so forcibly that I forthwith set out with Bismarck-Bohlen to lay in a supply for myself.

I spent the night in a handsome house, the property of an exceptionally kind and polite gentleman bearing the indisputably German name of Lager, but who was nevertheless French from head to foot, if intense hatred of the Prussians be a sign of Gallic nationality. At daybreak on the 26th word came for us to be ready to move by the Châlons road at seven o'clock, but before we got off the order was suspended till two in the afternoon. In the interval General von Moltke arrived and held a long conference with the King, and when we did pull out we travelled the remainder of the afternoon in company with a part of the Crown Prince's army, which after this conference inaugurated the series of movements from Bar-le-Duc northward that finally compelled the surrender at Sedan. This sudden change of direction I did not at first understand, but soon learned that it was because of the movements of Marshal MacMahon, who, having united the French army beaten at Wörth with three fresh corps at Châlons, was marching to relieve Metz in obedience to orders from the Minister of War, at Paris.

As we passed along the column, we noticed that the Crown Prince's troops were doing their best, the officers urging the men to their utmost exertions, persuading weary laggards and driving up stragglers. As a general thing, however, they marched in good shape notwithstanding the rapid gait and the trying heat, for at the outset of the campaign the Prince had divested them of all impedimenta except essentials, and they were therefore in excellent trim for a forced march.

The King travelled farther than usual

that day—to Clermont—so we did not get shelter till late, and even then not without some confusion, for the quartermaster, having set out toward Châlons before the change of programme was ordered, was not at hand to provide for us. I had extreme good luck, though, in being quartered with a certain apothecary who, having lived for a time in the United States, claimed it as a privilege even to lodge me, and certainly made me his debtor for the most generous hospitality. It was not so with some of the others, however, and Count Bismarck was particularly unfortunate, being billeted in a very small and uncomfortable house, where, visiting him to learn more fully what was going on, I found him wrapped in a shabby old dressing-gown, hard at work. He was established in a very small room, whose only furnishings consisted of a table—at which he was writing—a couple of rough chairs, and the universal featherbed, this time made on the floor in one corner of the room. On my remarking upon the limited character of his quarters, the Count replied, with great good humor, that they were all right and that he should get along well enough. Even the tramp of his clerks in the attic and the clanking of his orderlies' sabres below did not disturb him much; he said, in fact, that he would have no grievance at all, were it not for a guard of Bavarian soldiers stationed about the house, for his safety, he presumed, the sentinels from which insisted on protecting and saluting the Chancellor of the North German Confederation in and out of season, a proceeding that led to embarrassment sometimes, as he was much troubled with a severe dysentery. Notwithstanding his trials, however, and in the midst of the correspondence on which he was so intently engaged, he graciously took time to explain that the sudden movement northward from Bar-le-Duc was, as I have previously recounted, the result of information that Marshal MacMahon was endeavoring to relieve Metz by marching along the Belgian frontier; "a blundering manœuvre," remarked the Chancellor, "which cannot be accounted for unless it has been brought about by the political situation of the French."

All night long the forced march of the army went on through Clermont, and when I turned out just after daylight the columns were still pressing forward, the men looking tired and much bedraggled, as indeed they had reason to be, for from recent rains the roads were very sloppy. Notwithstanding this, however, the troops were pushed ahead with all possible vigor to intercept MacMahon and force a battle before he could withdraw from his faulty movement, for which it has since been ascertained he was not at all responsible. Indeed those at the royal headquarters seemed to think of nothing else than to strike MacMahon, for, feeling pretty confident that Metz could not be relieved, they manifested not the slightest anxiety on that score.

By eight o'clock, the skies having cleared, the headquarters set out for Grand Pré, which place we reached early in the afternoon, and that evening I again had the pleasure of dining with the King. The conversation at table was almost wholly devoted to the situation, of course, everybody expressing surprise at the manœuvre of the French at this time, their march along the Belgian frontier being credited entirely to Napoleon. Up to bedtime there was still much uncertainty as to the exact positions of the French, but next morning intelligence being received which denoted the probability of a battle, we drove about ten miles, to Buzancy, and there, mounting on horses, rode to the front.

The French were posted not far from Buzancy in a strong position, their right resting near Stonne, and the left extending over into the woods beyond Beaumont. About ten o'clock the Crown Prince of Saxony advanced against this line, and while a part of his army turned the French right, compelling it to fall back rapidly, the German centre and right attacked with great vigor and much skill, surprising one of the divisions of General de Failly's corps while the men were in the act of cooking their breakfast.

The French fled precipitately, leaving behind their tents and other camp equipage, and on inspecting the ground which they had abandoned so hastily, I noticed

on all sides ample evidence that not even the most ordinary precautions had been taken to secure the division from surprise. The artillery horses had not been harnessed, and many of them had been shot down at the picket rope where they had been halted the night before, while numbers of men were lying dead with loaves of bread or other food instead of their muskets in their hands.

Some three thousand prisoners and nearly all the artillery and mitrailleuses of the division were captured, while the fugitives were pursued till they found shelter behind Douay's corps and the rest of de Failly's beyond Beaumont. The same afternoon there were several other severe combats along the Meuse, but I had no chance of witnessing any of them, and just before nightfall I started back to Buzancy, to which place the King's headquarters had been brought during the day.

The morning of the 31st the King moved to Vendresse. First sending our carriage back to Grand Pré for our trunks, Forsyth and I mounted our horses and rode to the battle-field, accompanied by an English nobleman, the Duke of Manchester. The part of the field we traversed was still thickly strewn with the dead of both armies, though all the wounded had been collected in the hospitals. In the village of Beaumont we stopped to take a look at several thousand French prisoners, whose worn clothing and evident dejection told that they had been doing a deal of severe marching under great discouragements.

The King reached the village shortly after, and we all continued on to Chémery, just beyond where his Majesty alighted from his carriage to observe his son's troops file past as they came in from the direction of Stonne. This delay caused us to be as late as nine o'clock before we got shelter that night, but as it afforded me the best opportunity I had yet had for seeing the German soldiers on the march, I did not begrudge the time. They moved in a somewhat open and irregular column of fours, the intervals between files especially intended to give room for a peculiar swinging gait with which the men seemed to urge themselves over the ground with ease and rapidity. There was little or no straggling, and being strong, lusty young fellows and lightly equipped—they carried only needle-guns, ammunition, a very small knapsack, a water-bottle, and a haversack—they strode by with an elastic step, covering at least three miles an hour.

It having been definitely ascertained that the demoralized French were retiring to Sedan, on the evening of August 31st the German army began the work of hemming them in there, so disposing the different corps as to cover the ground from Donchery around by Raucourt to Carignan. The next morning this line was to be drawn in closer on Sedan; and the Crown Prince of Saxony was therefore ordered to take up a position to the north of Bazeilles beyond the right bank of the Meuse, while the Crown Prince of Prussia was to cross his right wing over the Meuse at Remilly, to move on Bazeilles, his centre meantime marching against a number of little hamlets still held by the French between there and Donchery. At this last-mentioned place strong reserves were to be held, and from it the Eleventh Corps, followed by the Fifth, and a division of cavalry, was to march on to St. Menges.

Forsyth and I started early next morning, September 1st, and in a thick fog, which subsequently gave place to bright sunshine, we drove to the village of Chevenges, where mounting our horses we rode in a northeasterly direction to the heights of Frénois and Wadelincourt, bordering the river Meuse on the left bank, from which crest we had a good view of the town of Sedan with its encircling fortifications, which, though extensive, were not so formidable as those around Metz. The King and his staff were already established on these heights, and at a point so well chosen that his Majesty could observe the movements of both armies immediately east and south of Sedan, and also to the northwest toward Floing and the Belgian frontier.

The battle was begun to the east and northeast of Sedan, as early as half-past four o'clock by the German right wing — the fighting being desultory — and

near the same hour the Bavarians attacked Bazeilles. This village, some two miles southeast of Sedan, being of importance was defended with great obstinacy, the French contesting from street to street and house to house the attack of the Bavarians till near ten o'clock, when, almost every building being knocked to pieces, they were compelled to relinquish the place. The possession of this village gave the Germans to the east of Sedan a continuous line extending from the Meuse northward through La Moncelle and Daigny to Givonne, and almost to the Belgian frontier.

While the German centre and right were thus engaged, the left had moved in accordance with the prescribed plan. Indeed some of these troops had crossed the Meuse the night before, and now, by a little after six o'clock, their advance could be seen just north of the village of Floing. Thus far these columns, under the immediate eye of the Crown Prince of Prussia, had met with no opposition to their march, and as soon as they got to the high ground above the village they began extending to the east to connect with the army of the Meuse. This juncture was effected at Illy, without difficulty, and the French army was now completely encompassed.

After a severe fight the Crown Prince drove the French through Floing, and as the ground between this village and Sedan is an undulating open plain, everywhere visible, there was then offered a rare opportunity for seeing the final conflict preceding the surrender. Presently up out of the little valley where Floing is located came the Germans, deploying just on the rim of the plateau a very heavy skirmish line, supported by a line of battle at close distance. When these skirmishers appeared, the French infantry had withdrawn within its intrenched lines, but a strong body of their cavalry, already formed in a depression to the right of the Floing road, now rode at the Germans in gallant style, going clear through the dispersed skirmishers to the main line of battle. Here the slaughter of the French was awful, for in addition to the deadly volleys from the solid battalions of their enemies, the skirmishers, who had rallied in knots at advantageous places, were now delivering a severe and effective fire. The gallant horsemen therefore had to retire precipitately, but reforming in the depression, they again undertook the hopeless task of breaking the German infantry, making in all four successive charges. Their ardor and pluck were of no avail, however, for the Germans, growing stronger every minute by the accession of troops from Floing, met the fourth attack in such large force that even before coming in contact with their adversaries, the French broke and retreated to the protection of the intrenchments, where, from the beginning of the combat, had been lying plenty of idle infantry, some of which at least, it seemed plain to me, ought to have been thrown into the fight. This action was the last one of consequence around Sedan, for though with the contraction of the German lines their batteries kept cannonading more or less, and the rattle of musketry continued to be heard here and there, yet the hard fighting of the day practically ended on the plateau of Floing.

By three o'clock, the French being in a desperate and hopeless situation, the King ordered the firing to be stopped, and at once despatched one of his staff —Colonel von Bronsart—with a demand for a surrender. Just as this officer was starting off I remarked to Bismarck that Napoleon himself would likely be one of the prizes, but the Count, incredulous, replied: "Oh, no; the old fox is too cunning to be caught in such a trap; he has doubtless slipped off to Paris"—a belief which I found to prevail pretty generally about headquarters.

In the lull that succeeded, the King invited many of those about him to luncheon, a caterer having provided from some source or other a substantial meal of good bread, chops, and peas, with a bountiful supply of red and sherry wines. Among those present were Prince Carl, Bismarck, von Moltke, von Roon, the Duke of Weimar, the Duke of Coburg, the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, Count Hatzfeldt, Colonel Walker of the English army, General Forsyth, and I. The King was agreeable and gracious at all times, but on this occasion he was particularly so, being nat-

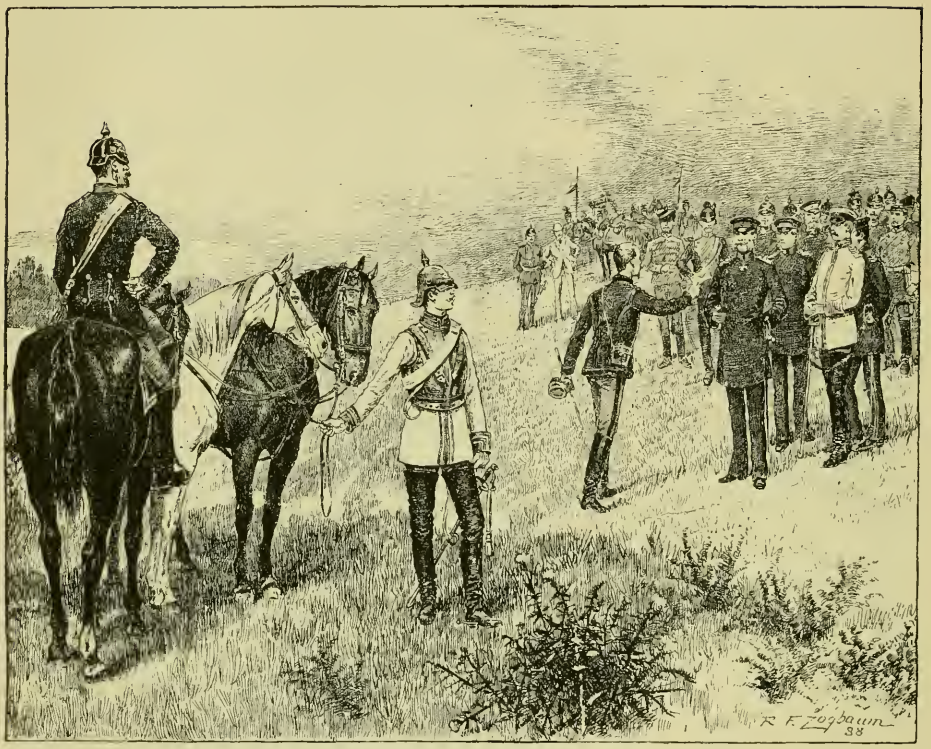
urally in a happy frame of mind because this day the war had reached a crisis which presaged for the near future the complete vanquishment of the French.

Between four and five o'clock Colonel von Bronsart returned from his mission to Sedan, bringing word to the King that the commanding officer there, General Wimpffen, wished to know, in order that the further effusion of blood might be spared, upon what terms he might surrender. The Colonel brought the intelligence, also, that the French Emperor was in the town. Soon after von Bronsart's arrival a French officer approached from Sedan, preceded by a white flag and two German officers. Coming up the road till within a few hundred yards of us they halted; then one of the Germans rode forward to say that the French officer was Napoleon's adjutant, bearing an autograph letter from the Emperor to the King of Prussia. At this the King, followed by Bismarck, von Moltke, and von Roon, walked out to the front a little distance, and halted, his Majesty still in advance, the rest of us meanwhile forming in a line some twenty paces to the rear of the group. The envoy then approached, at first on horseback, but when within about a hundred yards he dismounted, and uncovering came the remaining distance on foot, bearing high up in his right hand the despatch from Napoleon. The bearer proved to be General Reille, and as he handed the Emperor's letter to the King, his Majesty saluted him with the utmost formality and precision. Napoleon's letter was the since famous one running, so characteristically, thus: "Not having been able to die in the midst of my troops, there is nothing left me but to place my sword in your Majesty's hands." The reading finished, the King returned to his former post, and after a conference with Bismarck, von Moltke, and von Roon, dictated an answer accepting Napoleon's surrender and requesting him to designate an officer with power to treat for the capitulation of the army, himself naming von Moltke to represent the Germans. The King then started for Vendresse to pass the night.

It was after seven o'clock now, and hence too late to arrange anything more where we were, so further negotiations were deferred till later in the evening, and I, wishing to be conveniently near Bismarck, resolved to take up quarters in Donchery. On our way thither we were met by the Count's nephew, who assuring us that it would be impossible to find shelter there in the village, as all the houses were filled with wounded, Forsyth and I decided to continue on to Chevenges. On the other hand Bismarck-Bohlen bore with him one great comfort—some excellent brandy. Offering the flask to his uncle, he said: "You've had a hard day of it; won't you refresh yourself?" The Chancellor, without wasting time to answer, raised the bottle to his lips, exclaiming: "Here's to the unification of Germany," which sentiment the gurgling of an astonishingly long drink seemed to emphasize. The Count then handed the bottle back to his nephew, who, shaking it, ejaculated, "Why, we can't pledge you in return—there is nothing left!" to which came the waggish response, "I beg pardon; it was so dark I couldn't see;" nevertheless there was a little remaining, as I myself can aver.

Having left our carriage at Chevenges, Forsyth and I stopped there to get it, but a long search proving fruitless, we took lodging in the village at the house of the curé, resolved to continue the hunt in the morning. But then we had no better success, so concluding that our vehicle had been pressed into the hospital service, we at an early hour on the 2d of September resumed the search, continuing on down the road in the direction of Sedan. Near the gate of the city we came on the German picket line, and one of the officers, recognizing our uniforms—he having served in the war of the Rebellion—stepped forward and addressed me in good English. We naturally fell into conversation, and in the midst of it there came out through the gate an open carriage, or landau, containing two men, one of whom, in the uniform of a general and smoking a cigarette, we recognized, when the conveyance drew near, as the Emperor Louis Napoleon. The landau went on toward Donchery at a leisurely pace, and we, inferring that there was something more important at hand just then than the recovery of our trap, followed at a re-

Meeting of Bismarck and Napoleon. (From a painting by Camphausen.)



"The envoy dismounted, and uncovering came the remaining distance on foot, bearing high up in his right hand the despatch from Napoleon."

spectful distance. Not quite a mile from Donchery is a cluster of three or four cottages, and at the first of these the landau stopped to await, as we afterward ascertained, Count Bismarck, with whom the diplomatic negotiations were to be settled. Some minutes elapsed before he came, Napoleon remaining seated in his carriage meantime, still smoking and accepting with nonchalance the staring of a group of German soldiers near by, who were gazing on their fallen foe with curious and eager interest.

Presently a clattering of hoofs was heard, and looking toward the sound I perceived the Chancellor cantering down the road. When abreast of the carriage he dismounted, and walking up to it, saluted the Emperor in a quick, brusque way that seemed to startle him. After a word or two the party moved perhaps a hundred yards further on, where they stopped opposite the weaver's cottage so famous from that day. This little house is on the east side of the Donchery road near its junction with that to Frénois, and stands about twenty paces back from the highway. In front is a stone wall covered with creeping vines, and from a gate in this wall runs to the front door a path, at that time bordered on both sides with potato vines.

The Emperor having alighted at the gate, he and Bismarck walked together along the narrow path and entered the cottage. Reappearing in about a quarter of an hour, they came out and seated themselves in the open air, the weaver having brought a couple of chairs. Here they engaged in an animated conversation, if much gesticulation is any indication. The talk lasted fully an hour, Bismarck seeming to do most of it, but at last he arose, saluted the Emperor, and strode down the path toward his horse. Seeing me standing near the gate, he joined me for a moment, and asked me if I had noticed how the Emperor started when they first met, and I telling him that I had, he added, "Well,

it must have been due to my manner, not my words, for these were : 'I salute your Majesty just as I would my King.'" Then the Chancellor continued to chat a few minutes longer, assuring me that nothing further was to be done there, and that we had better go to the Château Bellevue, where, he said, the formal surrender was to take place. With this he rode off toward Vendresse to communicate with his sovereign, and Forsyth and I made ready to go to the Château Bellevue.

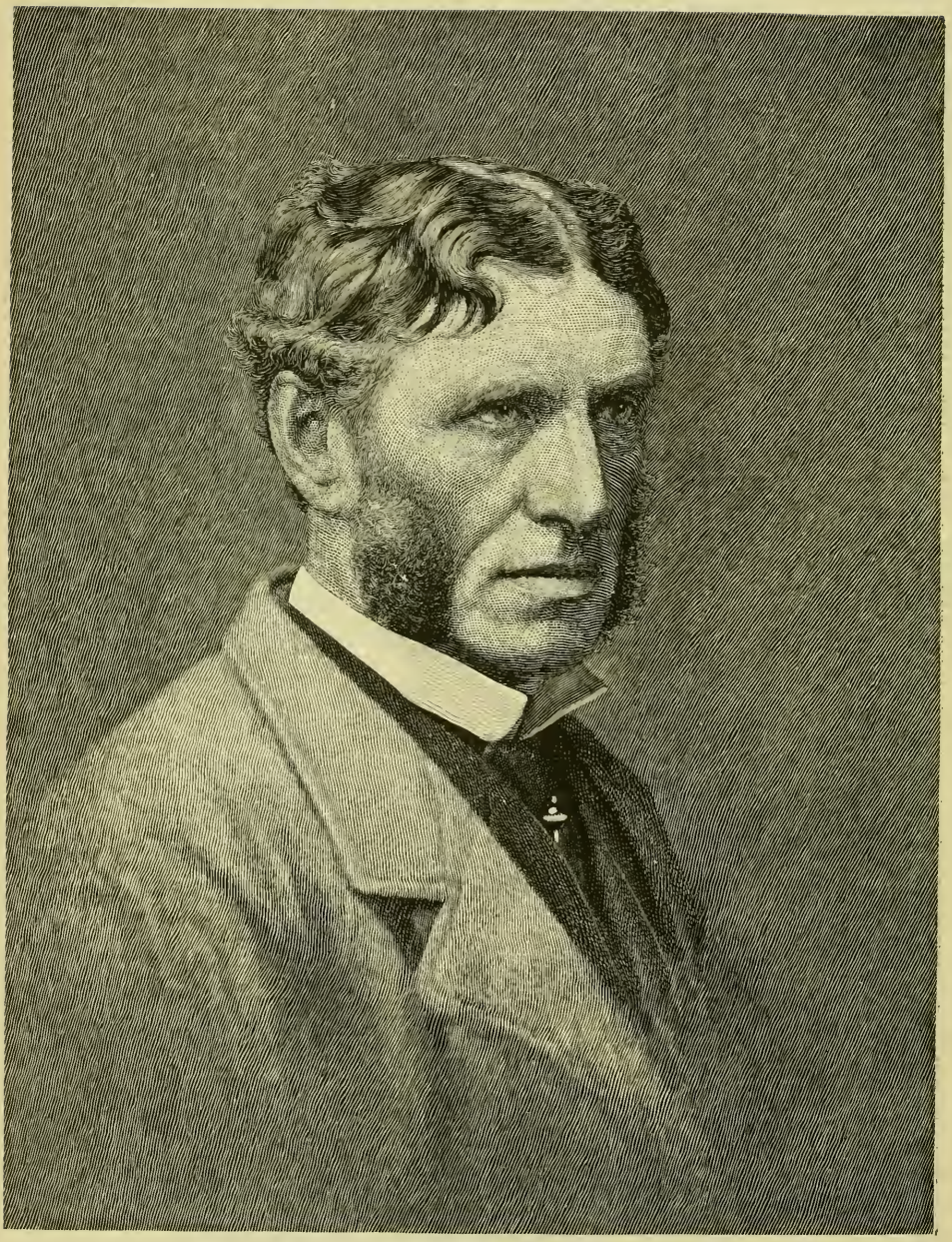
Before we set out, however, a number of officers of the King's suite arrived at the weaver's cottage, and from them I gathered that there were differences at the royal headquarters as to whether peace should be made then at Sedan, or the war continued till the French capital was taken. I further heard that the military advisers of the King strongly advocated an immediate move on Paris, while the Chancellor thought it best to make peace now, holding Alsace and Lorraine, and compelling the payment of an enormous levy of money; and these rumors were most likely correct, for I had often heard Bismarck say that France being the richest country in Europe, nothing would keep her quiet but effectually to empty her pockets; and besides this he impressed me as holding that it would be better policy to preserve the Empire.

On our way to the château we fell in with a number of artillery officers bringing up their guns hurriedly to post them closer in to the beleaguered town on a specially advantageous ridge. Inquiring the cause of this move, we learned that General Wimpffen had not yet agreed to the terms of surrender; that it was thought he would not, and that they wanted to be prepared for any such contingency. And they were preparing with a vengeance, too, for I counted seventy-two Krupp guns in one continuous line trained on the Château Bellevue and Sedan.

Napoleon went directly from the weaver's to the Château Bellevue, and about ten o'clock the King of Prussia arrived from Frénois, accompanied by a few of his own suite and the Crown Prince with several members of his staff; and, von Moltke and Wimpffen having settled their points of difference before the two monarchs met, within the next half-hour the articles of capitulation were formally signed.

On the completion of the surrender—the occasion being justly considered a great one—the Crown Prince proceeded to distribute among the officers congregated in the château grounds the order of the Iron Cross—a generous supply of these decorations being carried in a basket by one of his orderlies who followed him along as he walked about. Meantime the King, leaving Napoleon in the château to ruminate on the fickleness of fortune, drove off to see his own victorious soldiers, who greeted him with huzzas that rent the air and must have added to the pangs of the captive Emperor.

Napoleon and Bismarck at the Weaver's Cottage.



MATTHEW ARNOLD.

(From a photograph by the London Stereoscopic Company.)

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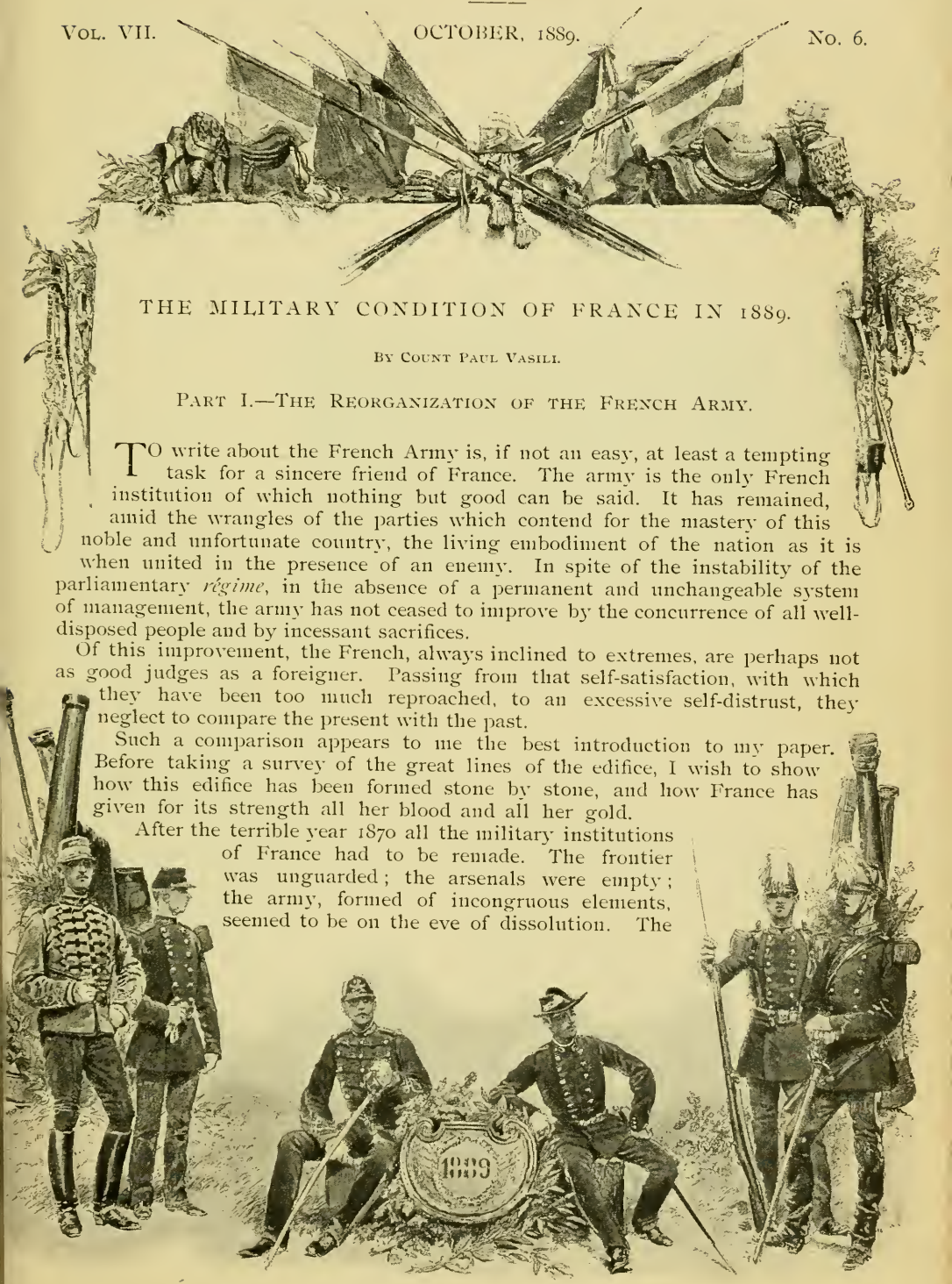

THE MILITARY CONDITION OF FRANCE IN 1889.

BY COUNT PAUL VASILI.

PART I.—THE REORGANIZATION OF THE FRENCH ARMY.

TO write about the French Army is, if not an easy, at least a tempting task for a sincere friend of France. The army is the only French institution of which nothing but good can be said. It has remained, amid the wrangles of the parties which contend for the mastery of this noble and unfortunate country, the living embodiment of the nation as it is when united in the presence of an enemy. In spite of the instability of the parliamentary *régime*, in the absence of a permanent and unchangeable system of management, the army has not ceased to improve by the concurrence of all well-disposed people and by incessant sacrifices.

Of this improvement, the French, always inclined to extremes, are perhaps not as good judges as a foreigner. Passing from that self-satisfaction, with which they have been too much reproached, to an excessive self-distrust, they neglect to compare the present with the past.

Such a comparison appears to me the best introduction to my paper. Before taking a survey of the great lines of the edifice, I wish to show how this edifice has been formed stone by stone, and how France has given for its strength all her blood and all her gold.

After the terrible year 1870 all the military institutions of France had to be remade. The frontier was unguarded; the arsenals were empty; the army, formed of incongruous elements, seemed to be on the eve of dissolution. The

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THE FLAG OF ST. CYR.

troops of the Empire and those organized for the defence of the nation, when confronted, looked at each other with unfriendly eyes.

The most pressing need was to form an army which would be homogeneous and truly national. This was effected by the law of 1872.

This law relating to recruiting, while borrowing its principles from the German system, increased the burdens of that system, to compensate for the numerical inferiority of the sources of recruiting for the French army. It was perceived that the success of the Germans was due not to their number alone, but still more to the fact that all the vital forces of the country were put at the service of the army, and that all the elements of the nation, all classes of society, without exception or privilege, combined in forming that army.

At the head of the law, then, was placed the declaration that all able-bodied Frenchmen between the ages of twenty and forty are obliged to render military service. All of the same age are a "contingent," and the twenty contingents provided by the law are apportioned thus: The five youngest contingents are in the active army, the next four in the reserve. The five following form what is called the territorial army, and the remaining six the reserve of that army. It was explicitly provided that the territorial army shall be used only for the defence of a territory included within certain limits, and that the territorial reserve shall not be called out except in a case of national danger.

The obligation of military service, general in time of war, admits in time of peace of certain restrictions and degrees, rendered necessary by certain social necessities and family needs.

Besides men absolutely unfit to bear arms, the law exempts from service in time of peace, recruits of a physical constitution of only moderate strength, and all below the minimum height, whom it places in various auxiliary services of the mobilized troops. It dispenses with the services of those who are the support of a family, the eldest sons of widows, the eldest of a family of orphans, and so on, all of whom are enrolled as part of the reserves only. It relieves from all military services those engaged in public instruction, and the clergy, as long as they remain in the active discharge of their duties. It admits to the benefit of the reduction of active service to a

single year: first, young men destined for the liberal professions; second, a part of the contingent determined by drawing lots, and the number of whom the minister fixes every year in accordance with the means placed at his command by the budget.

Under this system, out of the two hundred thousand able-bodied men who are every year put at the disposal of the land army, about one hundred and ten thousand serve for five years nominally, although in fact only forty-six months; thirty thousand men serve one year, and sixty thousand, who come under the exceptions above mentioned, receive a very cursory instruction during two periods of twenty-eight days.

This proportion of men insufficiently instructed appears too considerable, and a new law submitted to Parliament imposes on them an active service of one year. At the same time it extends the age of military obligation to forty-five, assures the organization of the territorial reserve, and assimilates the territorial army to the active army. The effect of these measures, which were rendered necessary by steps taken beyond the Rhine, will add about a million of men to the two millions of instructed soldiers that France can at present place on her frontiers.

The law of 1872 furnished the men. It was necessary to organize them and prepare them for prompt mobilization; to form in time of peace those great organic unities of the army, *corps d'armée*, divisions, brigades; to provide these with their staffs, with their different services and their equipments; to establish a simple relation between the unities of the command and the divisions of territory; to group the districts containing the reserve about the subsistence corps. To do this was the object of the law of 1873. By that law France is divided into eighteen *corps d'armée* districts of nearly equal extent, and each containing about two million inhabitants. Each of these districts is subdivided into eight districts, corresponding to the eight regiments of infantry of the corps. All the troops of the corps, infantry, cavalry,

THE POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL.

A CHASSEUR.

artillery, trains, and different services are stationed in time of peace each in its own territory; each active regiment having in its depots the arms, equipments, provisions, and wagons necessary to put it on a war footing, as well as those of the corresponding territorial force.

At the time of mobilization the infantry reserves domiciled in a subdivision of the district—that is to say, within a radius of forty kilometres—fill up the regiment garrisoned in their subdivision; the men belonging to the territorial army contributing at the same place to the mobilization of the territorial regiment. All the reserves, then, are essentially local and grouped around a *corps d'armée*. The corps, on the contrary, on its peace footing, is formed of recruits drawn from all parts of France. The latter arrangement at the same time cements the national unity, and assures in the active army a happy mixture of all conditions and races of men belonging to French soil. The simultaneous play of national recruiting and local reserves guarantees the rapidity of mobilization, and keeps up, with its complex qualities, the type of soldier I shall try to analyze farther on.

Carry your thoughts back to the sad experiences of 1870; recall those corps made up without due preparation, those field officers who were unacquainted with their troops and compelled to search for them at the various points of concentration; those troops led to the frontier without camp equipage and subsistence; the ordnance for the entire army accumulated at the one park of Vernon, out of which it could not be got, —and some estimate can be formed of the progress made!

When France is at war, she utilizes every man. But that does not suffice. The army claims all the resources of the country, its various crops, its working-stock, its horses. The horses especially are necessary to move the numerous equipages, the two thousand wagons which follow each *corps d'armée*. To the one hundred and thirty thousand horses constantly in use by the army must be added about three hundred thousand borrowed from agriculture or trade. The law of requisitions foresees and provides for this levy by the army on all the national wealth, on the railways, and on the beasts of burden. The method of making requisition for horses is arranged in a very ingenious fashion. Every two years military commissions take a census of and classify the horses of the country. Lists of the horses fit for service are made out, and they are classified according to their suitableness for the different arms. The staff of the *corps d'armée*, working on these lists, distributes among the regiments, according to their needs and prox-

IN SAUMUR.

CAVALRY DRILL AT SAUMUR.

inity, lists of the classified horses within their districts. When the army is mobilized, commissions of requisition take immediate possession of the horses.

An army organized and provided with all its *matériel* requires, besides, to be instructed and to have capable company officers. The greater the number of men to be handled, the more important becomes the individual training of the soldier, and the thorough instruction of the company officers, commissioned and non-commissioned.

France does not spare expense in her efforts to accomplish these two ends.

From the soldier she requires not only four years of active service, but, besides, two periods of instruction, each of twenty-eight days, every year during the time that he is numbered among the reserves, and a period of thirteen days each year while he is on the rolls of the territorial army. Eleven millions of francs are devoted every year to the expenses of those different musters. No European power consents to greater sacrifices.

The musters of the reserves take place at the same time as the grand manœuvres, and give to the new institution its full development. A true picture of war, the autumn manœuvres are for every one —generals, officers, and soldiers—the best of schools. They accustom the population to endure without murmurs the burdens

A PUPIL OF THE CAVALRY SCHOOL.

of the quartering of troops and the requisitions. All the *corps d'armée* take part in these manœuvres during a period which varies from fifteen to twenty days. Besides these manœuvres may be mentioned, as means of instruction for the officers, the visits of the staff to other countries, the exercises of the company officers, the studies required in winter time, and so on.

To form good non-commissioned company officers is not an easy thing when the term of service is short. The Germans have solved the problem by forming their sets of non-commissioned company officers and corporals exclusively of those who enlist after their term of service has expired, that is to say, of soldiers by profession. In France they have tried to follow the same system without success, in spite of all the advantages offered to non-commissioned officers who consent to remain in the army. Premiums, high pay, retiring pensions, various allowances, of which the total may exceed five thousand francs, have been powerless to keep up a regular current of re-engagements. The economic conditions are different in the two countries, and the general well-being in France disinclines the French non-commissioned officer to follow a military career.

Now, however, it is hoped to keep him in the army by reserving for him, by a new law, a large portion of those civil employments which are the promised land of all Frenchmen, every one of whom is born, more or less, a public functionary. Let me add that a new institution, schools for the children of soldiers and non-commissioned officers, will furnish, after a few years, an abundant nursery for non-commissioned officers. Already there are in operation six of these schools, with three thousand pupils.

Other schools have been founded, which assure, under the best conditions, a supply of company officers. These, under the former system, were taken partly from the soldiers and non-commissioned officers, partly from the Polytechnic School and that of St. Cyr, to which youths are admitted immediately after leaving the Lycées. To the establishments already existing, St. Cyr and Saumur for infantry and cavalry, the Polytechnic School and Ecole d'Application for artillery and engineering, have been added, for non-commissioned officers capable of advancement, schools at St. Maxent for infantry, at Versailles for artillery and train service, an annex at Saumur for cavalry, and an Ecole d'Administration at Vincennes.

The infantry officers improve themselves in the district schools of marksmanship, in the schools of gymnastics, and the schools of company work. The artillery officers can learn how to command batteries in practical courses at Bourges. The medical corps begin their studies at the Ecole de Santé recently established at Lyons, and finish them at the Val-de-Grace.

At the head of all these establishments of instruction has been placed the Superior School of War. This is at the same time a sort of academy intended to develop in the army military knowledge of a high order, and the source from which the service of the Staff is recruited. Officers of all arms can apply for admission there after five years of active service. They are received to the

number of from seventy-five to eighty every year, and pass two years in following the course of instruction. Their age, the constantly increasing number of those who apply to be examined for admission, the nature of their studies, make them a real *élite*, and from those who stand highest in it are chosen the members of the Staff.

The Staff, recruited in this way, is constantly renewed and strengthened by the rotation established between its service and that of the corps. Besides, the Staff, as in Germany, has its link of attachment to the General Staff instituted for the Ministry of War.

The creation of this General Staff of the Minister was the first reform in point of time, and not the least important of the reforms which followed the unfortunate campaign of 1870. Charged with elaborating plans of mobilization and concentration, with studying theatres of operations and foreign armies, the General Staff is the artisan of all that work of preparation which has in it the germ of success or disaster in wars to come. It corrects, in part, the deplorable effects of ministerial instability, and it would correct them entirely if the Chief of the Staff was a permanent officer. Here I touch one of the weak points of the French army.

INSPECTION REVIEW AT ST. MAXENT.

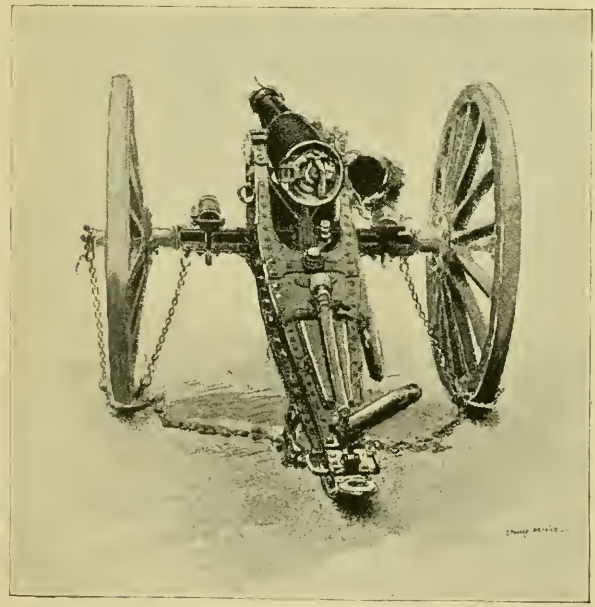
The army has for its sole chief, both administrative and military, the Minister, who combines in his hands the powers which in other countries are divided between the sovereign, his minister, his chief of staff, and perhaps a prince who is commander-in-chief. Never have more responsibilities been heaped upon a merely ephemeral personage. Twenty ministers

have succeeded each other since the war of 1870, and it is remarkable that, with a direction so variable, the military condition of the country has been, little by little, restored. It has not been, however, without a notable loss of time, of money, and of effort.

The evil is too evident not to have awakened attention in France. Different remedies for it have been sought, of which the happiest, beyond doubt, is the institution of five army inspectors. These five general officers, destined to command armies in the field, form the nucleus of the Superior Council of War. They constitute a stable element in the chief command. A suggestion of theirs may be expected to be followed, but always upon the delicate condition that the Minister is willing to follow it. The true remedy, in my opinion, would have been the separation of the administrative and military duties of the Minister, confiding the latter to a commander-in-chief assisted by a chief of staff.

BREVET OFFICER OF STAFF.

Such are, in outline, the reforms and improvements made since 1870. Recruiting, organization, instruction, command,—in these are combined everything which concerns the army. Not to these alone, however, have the efforts of the country been confined. Surprised by the destruction of their brave troops, the French have obeyed a natural reaction in devoting themselves perhaps too much to the investigation of mechanical forces, and in being absorbed in perfecting their *matériel* and armament. Holding too cheaply that factor essential to success in offensive war, *the man*, they have conceded a very large part to the secondary factors, the passive elements, the arms, the *matériel*, and especially the fortifications.



NEW FIELD GUN.

We Russians smile at all these technical influences and all this progress of modern mechanical art. "It is not precisely those who know how to kill," says our Dragomirow, "but those who know how to die, who are all-powerful on a field of battle."

With this reservation we must offer homage to the pecuniary sacrifices which this indomitable nation has made, and to the marvelous material results it has obtained.

The army equipages, more than twenty thousand wagons, kept complete and on wheels, with their harness, are divided among the different places of mobilization. At the same points, in the storehouses for mobilization, are stored the uniforms, equipments, arms and ammunition necessary for two million men. Immense stocks of provisions for mobilization, concentration, and the reserves are laid up and are kept fresh by the daily consumption.

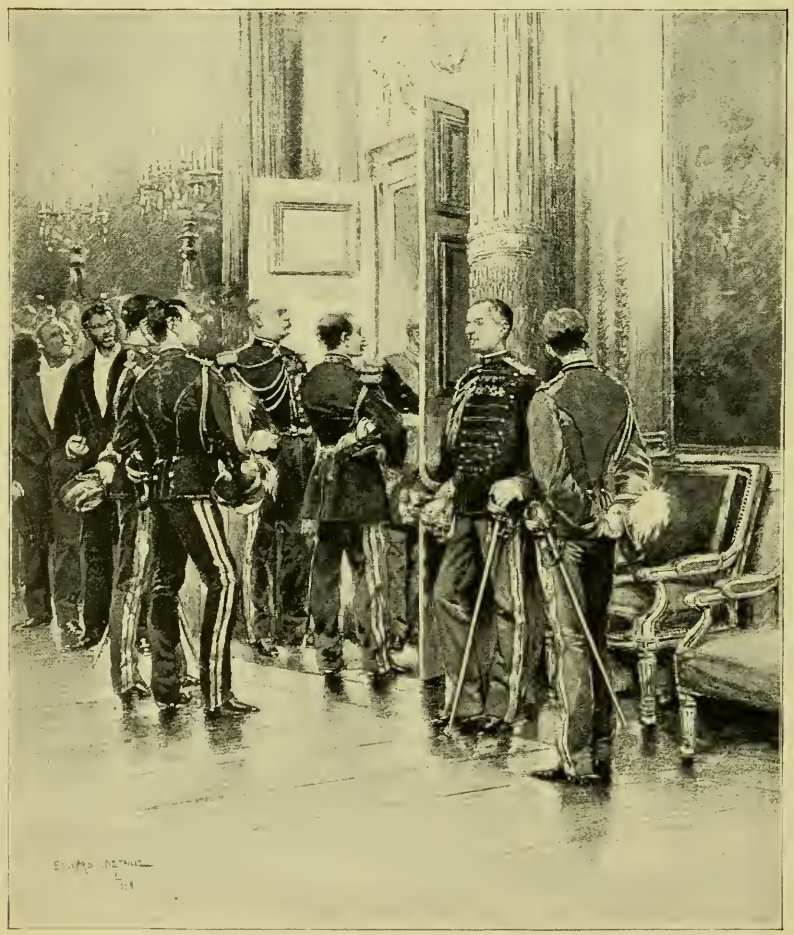
In fifteen years the armament of the troops has been twice changed. For the *matériel* of seven and of five of the Reffye system, created immediately after the war, the artillery has substituted pieces of ninety-five, ninety, and eighty millimetres; for wooden caissons, iron caissons. The infantry has just exchanged its Gras gun of the 1874 pattern for the repeating Lebel gun of the 1886 model, which is considered the best arm in use in European armies. The powder fac-

STAFF OF GENERAL OF DIVISION.

tories make for this gun, and perhaps for the artillery, a smokeless powder, of which the projectile force is wonderful, and the composition of which is kept secret. From their laboratories comes mélinite, an explosive more powerful than dynamite. The spreading fuse and the grape-shot shell made their appearance in France long before they were known in Germany.

The expense of these costly inventions is counted by hundreds of millions of francs. And yet it is always possible that these inventions may be surpassed, and consequently their use is of doubtful value. To give the soldier a new arm appears an excellent thing, but always on condition that he will have to use it soon.

Not less burdensome are the fortifications which have been built everywhere on French soil. The eastern frontier presented no good line of defence. So an artificial frontier has been constructed on the most easterly of the five consecutive elevations which the geologists designate as surrounding the basin in which Paris lies. Verdun, Toul, Epinal, Belfort, immense entrenched camps, are the points which connect this defensive line. From Verdun to Toul, all the openings through the hills of the heights of the Meuse, from Epinal to Belfort, all those of Faucilles, are guarded by stone forts. This continuous line of entrenchments leaves for armies two roads only,—one between the strong places of Mezières and Verdun, the other between Toul and Epinal,



MILITARY HEADQUARTERS OF THE PRESIDENT.

OFFICE OF THE SERGEANT MAJOR.

where the French flatter themselves they will be able to stop a German invasion.

Belfort itself is connected by a continuous line with Montbeliard and the Swiss frontier. On the latter, all the passes of the Jura are guarded by works and the entrenched camp of Besançon.

Along the frontier of the Alps, Grenoble bars the valley of the Isère, Briançon that of the Durance, Nice the road along the seashore. All the places which had been built before have been altered according to the most recent models. In the interval, forts have been built to guard the high valleys of the Isère at Conflans, of the Arc at Lesseillon, of the Guil at Mont-Dauphin, of the Vesubia near Utelle. Lyons, strategic key of all this region, and the objective point of an Italian invasion, is surrounded by forts in a double girdle, of which the circumference is sixty kilometres.

On the northern frontier, Belgian neutrality has not been thought a sufficient guaranty. Dunkirk, Lille, Valenciennes, Maubeuge have become entrenched camps of the first order. I may mention, in passing, the defences of the sea coast, and the works, in other respects insufficient, at the war ports of Brest, Cherbourg, and Toulon.

Behind this first line of defence established on the frontiers of the north, east, and southeast, a second line has been constructed. The triangle formed by Laon, La Fère et Soissons stands up to bar the opening of the Oise. The unfinished camp of Rheims is situated between the Aisne and the Marne. Langres and

Dijon command the passages of the plateau of Langres.

Behind all these, Paris, supreme support of the national defence, offers its triple line of forts, and its entrenched camp of two hundred kilometres, capable of enclosing two millions of men.

All this system of defence, ingeniously planned, and which has cost more than a half-milliard of francs, appears to be seriously weakened by the discovery of the explosives hellhofite, belhite, mélinite. If the great entrenched camps, by reason of their movable garrisons; if the defences of the Alps, by reason of their situation,—seem to be always susceptible of being utilized, the stone forts are no longer of use. This is a sore loss for France, but a lesson by which she will profit, and her true friends ought to be glad of it. This lavish supply of fortifications was contrary to the national temperament. It weakened from the beginning the direction of operations, and prepared a defensive campaign. Four hundred thousand men would hardly have been sufficient to garrison all these strong places, and the absence of these men would have been cruelly felt on the battlefields of the Meuse or the Moselle. "The Russians," writes General Zukow, "have no need to shelter themselves behind ramparts or to surround themselves with trenches." I think the state of the case is the same with their future allies, their old rivals before Sebastopol.

The more I condemn the expenditure of the sums which have been thrown away on fortresses, the more I approve of what has been spent upon the system of railroads. They are a fifth arm in modern war, and the arm which contributes most strongly to assure an offensive campaign. We are learning this in Russia, though a little late. In France the results already obtained are prodigious. The

CONSTRUCTION OF A REDOUBT.

BATTERY OF ARTILLERY.

system of railroads which amounted to sixteen thousand nine hundred kilometres in length in 1870, now amounts to more than thirty-three thousand, and will reach thirty-seven thousand kilometres. Eleven lines with a double track end on the frontier, which extends from Mezières to Belfort, furnishing means of transportation for two mobilized *corps d'armée;* and more than a hundred military stations, ranged one behind the other *en echelon*, at the terminal points of the road, assure the prompt landing of the troops, and especially of *matériel* in the zone of concentration.

Figures have their eloquence,—a little dry to read, but very convincing. I will cite a few of them as a conclusion to this first part of my article.

The sums that France expended up to 1887 for the restoration of its army, under the head of extraordinary expenses, reached the respectable figure of two milliards two hundred and forty-three millions of francs. In 1888 a new account was opened, which, so far as can be seen, will exceed eight hundred millions of francs.

The ordinary war budget, which under the Empire did not exceed four hundred and fifty millions of francs, reached five hundred and eighty-two millions in 1886,

and is five hundred and fifty millions for 1889. If to this be added the average marine budget (without regard to the colonies), say two hundred millions, it appears that France appropriates for the support of her land and sea forces nearly eight hundred millions of francs, the fourth of her total budget. Happy the countries which are ignorant of these unavoidable necessities, and devote in peace their forces to the development of their well-being and the progress of civilization.

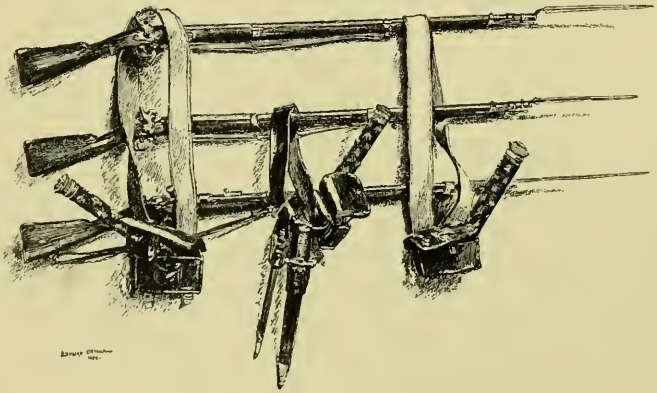
So much for the sacrifices France makes. It would be unjust not to mention the results obtained by them.

The imperial army numbered on paper four hundred and thirty thousand men, but in fact, three hundred and eighty thousand, of whom hardly two hundred and fifty thousand could be put in the field at the beginning of the campaign. Its reserves amounted to more than one hundred and fourteen thousand drilled men. The Garde Mobile furnished about five hundred thousand men without any sort of training.

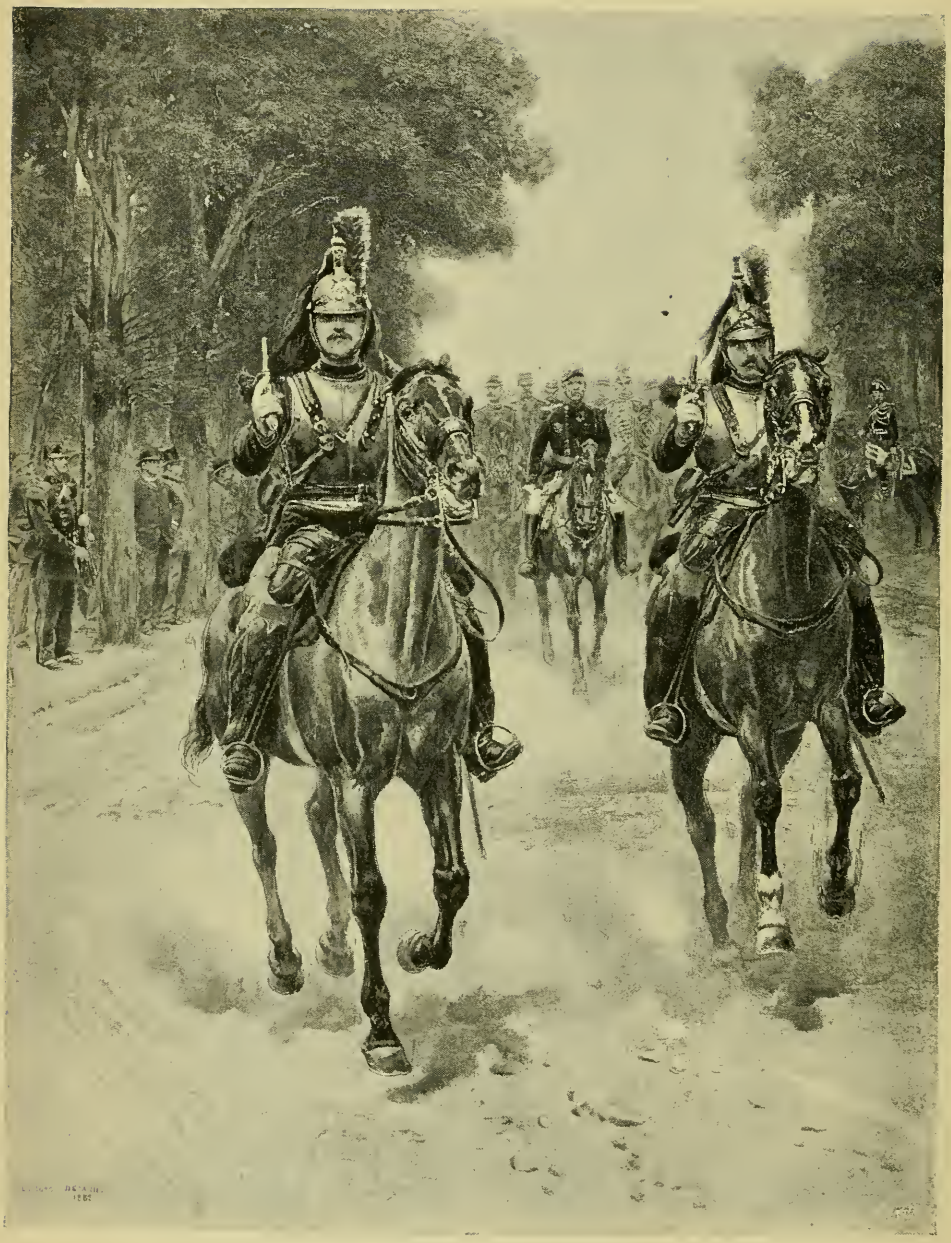
ORDNANCE OFFICER.

To-day the French army on a peace footing has an effective force of twenty-six thousand officers of all grades, five hundred and fifteen thousand soldiers, one hundred and forty thousand horses. Making allowance for the gendarmerie and those absent on leave, the net effective force is in 1889 four hundred and seventy-three thousand officers and soldiers. Further on, we shall see that the reserves of men thoroughly drilled will bring this army up to nearly one million three hundred thousand men. An equal number of drilled soldiers will be found in the two classes of the territorial army.

(To be concluded next month.)



OLD AND NEW RIFLES, WITH MARSHALS' BATONS.



PLATOON OF ESCORT (CUIRASSIERS).

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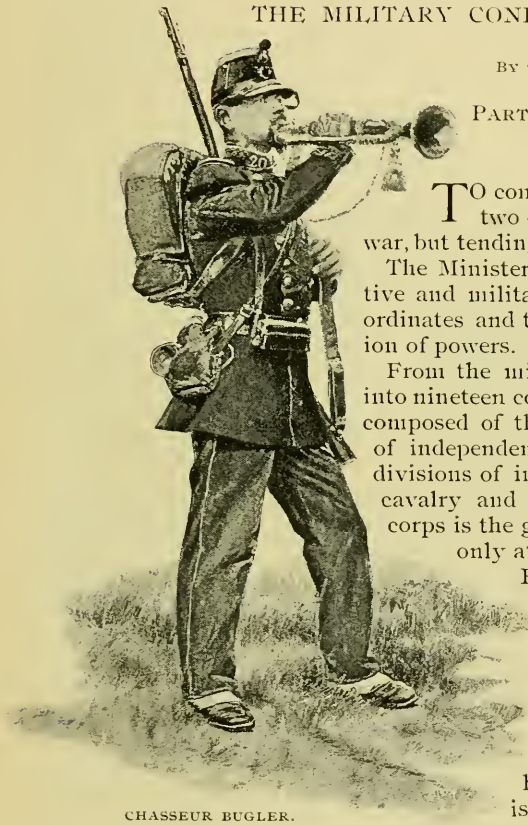
THE MILITARY CONDITION OF FRANCE IN 1889.

BY COUNT PAUL VASILI.

PART II. (CONCLUSION.)—THE ARMY ON A PEACE FOOTING.



CHASSEUR BUGLER.

TO command an army and to administer it are two distinct functions, connected in time of war, but tending to separate, in France, in time of peace. The Minister, supreme chief, unites the administrative and military powers, which he exercises by subordinates and through bureaus separate for each division of powers.

From the military standpoint the army is divided into nineteen corps (eighteen in France, the nineteenth composed of the troops in Africa) and six divisions of independent cavalry. Each corps includes two divisions of infantry, one brigade of artillery, one of cavalry and the different accessory services. The corps is the great organic unity which becomes alive only at the moment of mobilization.

From the administrative standpoint, in the daily life of the army, each arm and service has in some sort an autonomy of its own and a separate point of attachment to the corresponding bureau of the Ministry,—the bureaus of infantry, cavalry, artillery, engineers, the administrative services, and health. The weakness of this autonomy is shown by the existence of special committees and inspectors of arms. I explain the system without passing an opinion on it. The logical outcome is, that a study of the French Army in time of peace must deal successively and separately with the different arms of the service,—infantry, cavalry, artillery, and engineers.

A company of infantry has in peace an effective force of about one hundred men, of whom three are commissioned officers. When the appropriations will permit, it ought to be gradually raised to the half of its war footing, that is, to one hundred and twenty-five men. From this time forward the companies of frontier troops when full will exceed one hundred and fifty men.

All the battalions, with the exception of certain battalions of chasseurs, are uniformly composed of four companies.

The active infantry comprises five hundred and sixty-one battalions and two thousand two hundred and eighty-six companies, namely:

In France,—one hundred and forty-four regiments, as subdivisions of each of the eighteen *corps d'armée*, each regiment having three battalions, with a complementary

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set of company officers for a fourth battalion; eighteen district regiments of three battalions, which garrison the frontier; and thirty battalions of chasseurs, of whom twelve form the infantry of the Alpine troops.

In Africa—(the nineteenth corps),—four regiments of Zouaves, of four battalions each, with two companies to guard the storehouses; four regiments of Turcos, of four battalions each, with one company to guard the storehouses, recruited among the natives; five battalions of light African infantry, of which two are detached at Tonquin, receiving men sentenced to fine or imprisonment; four companies of discipline composed of the bad boys; and four regiments of foreigners, of four battalions each, and one company to guard the storehouses. The bulk of these regiments is detached at Tonquin. They are recruited principally from men of Alsace-Lorraine, who thus return, with usury, their debt to the country of their choice.

The Ministry of War pays besides, out of the special budget for Indo-China, for one regiment of Tonquinese sharp-shooters (the three others are taken from the navy) and four battalions of Annamite chasseurs.

The territorial army is divided like the active force: one regiment to each of the eight subdivisions of the eighteen districts of the *corps d'armée*, with two regiments for Aix in Provence. It thus numbers one hundred and forty-five regiments of three battalions each. Besides, it has in Algiers nine battalions of Zouaves of five companies each.

The uniform of the French infantry has been little changed since the war. It has kept the legendary red trousers, the dark blue tunic with two rows of buttons, the gray great-coat, the *képi* with round visor, the only head-covering, while waiting for

ADJUTANT-MAJOR, INFANTRY OF THE LINE.

INFANTRY ARRIVING AT A TOWN.

the helmet which the Prussophiles have taken it into their heads to cover the infantry with. The foot-covering alone has been greatly improved, as much it needed to be. The shoe with a gaiter has been replaced by an excellent laced half-boot, which the Germans, by the way, have just copied exactly. Such a thing is rare enough to be worth mentioning.

Though the effect is somewhat unsightly at parades on review, this costume is very attractive in the field. Nothing is more picturesque than the short foot-soldier, the "*piou-piou*," with

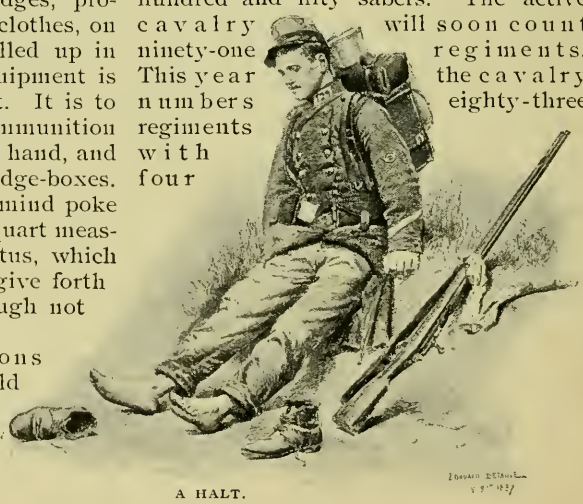
AN INFANTRY SOLDIER.

his large and warm overcoat, with its flaps turned back, his *képi* well set on his head, his two cartridge-boxes, his short sword-bayonet and shovel fastened to his belt, his tin can hung on his cross-belt, his knapsack of black cloth containing his surplus of cartridges, provisions, and change of underclothes, on top of which is his jacket rolled up in a close sheath. All this equipment is well arranged and convenient. It is to be regretted only that the ammunition is not, as in Germany, all at hand, and is divided among three cartridge-boxes. People of a sarcastic turn of mind poke fun at the noisy tin-ware, the quart measure, can, and cooking apparatus, which make a column of infantry give forth a note which is cheerful, though not very military.

There may be two opinions about the equipment and field *matériel* of the French foot-soldier. There can be but one about his arms. He has now, in the Lebel rifle, the best weapon in existence. This gun, of small caliber—eight millimeters—of a light and almost delicate appearance, weighs 4.120 kilograms (a trifle less than nine pounds). The magazine placed under the barrel holds eight cartridges, besides one in the chamber through which the cartridge passes from the magazine to the barrel, and one at the base of the barrel. The soldier has thus ten cartridges to fire. Its peculiar qualities are essentially projectile. The initial speed obtained reaches six hundred and twenty meters; at four hundred meters, the height of the curve described by the cartridge is not more than .20 of a meter, and the soldier fires without having to use a sight. The ball, covered with nickel, has an extraordinary penetrating power. The powder used gives out no smoke and makes no sensible detonation.

Imagine a line of sharp-shooters concealed at the edge of a wood and throwing death at a distance with this little weapon, without its being possible to tell whence the deadly messengers come! As a last advantage the cartridge weighs barely twenty-nine grams, so that, without being overburdened, the soldier carries one hundred and twenty cartridges, instead of seventy-eight of the Gras model.

All the cavalry regiments, with the exception of the Spahis, have five squadrons, the fifth to guard the storehouses. The four mobile squadrons can take the field at any hour, each with one hundred and fifty sabers. The active cavalry will soon count ninety-one regiments. This year the cavalry numbers eighty-three regiments with four



A HALT.

hundred and nineteen squadrons, namely:

In France—twelve regiments of cuirassiers, twenty-eight of dragoons, twenty-one of chasseurs, and twelve of hussars; in Africa—six regiments of African chasseurs and four regiments of Spahis.

The territorial cavalry is composed of one regiment for each *corps d'armée*. Each of these regiments numbers eight squadrons, of which four are dragoons and four light cavalry. Adding to this four squadrons of African chasseurs, gives a total of one hundred and forty-eight squadrons in the territorial army.

The dress and equipment of the cavalry corps differ only in the great subdivisions of the army. The chasseurs and hussars, composing the light cavalry, wear the same sky-blue jacket, with black braid for the chasseurs and white for the hussars. On their head is a shako with a visor covered with copper, and with a chain-strap going under the chin. The dragoons, the cavalry of the line, wear a deep blue jacket, and a helmet with a horse-tail, which is both light and of the most elegant model. The cuirassiers, the heavy cavalry, are dressed in a blue tunic, with a row of buttons and epaulets. They have the same helmet as the dragoons, and a cuirass of tempered steel. The uniform of these different corps, especially that of the cuirassiers, has, on the whole, a fine effect. I find nothing to criticise in it except the trousers with spatterdashes, which are heavy for the man when on foot, and give him a bad appearance on horseback. It is proposed to substitute for these trousers breeches with short boots.

The French cavalry is generally well mounted. France has excellent races of horses, those from Tarbès and Arabians for the light cavalry, Limousine and those of Poitou for the cavalry of the line, and Anglo-Norman for the cuirassiers. There have been, however, some unfortunate crosses which have weakened

FOOT CHASSEURS.

the blood of the pure races, and there is discussion about the tendency of horse-breeders to produce draught-horses to the detriment of saddle-horses. Out of a horse population of three million five hundred thousand animals, the classifying commissioners report only one hundred thousand saddle-horses suitable for war service. Yet this is more than sufficient for all needs now foreseen.

The cavalry is armed with the saber for all the horsemen; the carbine for dragoons, chasseurs, hussars, and Spahis; the revolver for the cuirassiers. They have just introduced among the light cavalry an excellent model of a lance, with a bamboo staff, with which they will arm the first rank of each squadron.

The cavalry is furnished with tools, and exercised so as to be able to destroy railroads, blow up bridges, and cut or repair telegraphic lines.

The artillery has always been the favorite arm of the country. Frederick the Great, in his time, remarked the good qualities of the French artillery. After an instant of eclipse in 1870 it has been restored, more numerous and better equipped than ever.

ALGERIAN OFFICER OF TIRAILLEURS.

AFRICAN TIRAILLEUR.

The field artillery now numbers, in the active army, four hundred and sixty-one batteries and two thousand seven hundred and sixty-six pieces, namely:

In Europe—nineteen regiments, each of twelve batteries, each regiment attached to a division; nineteen regiments, each of eleven batteries, each regiment attached to a corps; twelve mountain batteries, constituting the artillery of the Alpine troops; and in Africa—twelve batteries, of which eight are mountain batteries and four are horse.

All the batteries in time of peace have their six pieces and several caissons drawn by six horses.

The fortress artillery, of recent creation, forms sixteen battalions, each of six batteries on foot, that is to say, ninety-six

batteries in Europe, to which must be added four batteries in Africa.

One regiment of divisional and one of corps artillery are combined in a brigade. One of these brigades is stationed in the territory of each of the eighteen *corps d'armée*. The nineteenth brigade is stationed at Vincennes. At the time of mobilization the divisional regiment furnishes six batteries to each of the two divisions of the *corps d'armée*.

It is proper to include in the artillery the two regiments of pontoniers whom so many glorious traditions attach to this arm of the service. Each of these regiments numbers fourteen companies. Twenty-six companies of pontoniers are stationed in France, one in Algiers, one in Tonquin.

The companies of artillery workmen and pyrotechnists must not be forgotten.

The territorial artillery is formed in the proportion of one regiment to each district of a *corps d'armée*. The number of batteries in territorial regiments varies from eight to thirty, according to the resources of the district. Altogether, there are in the territorial artillery two hundred and eighty-eight batteries.

The dress of the artillerymen is a cape, *bleu de roi*, with black braid; the trousers of the same color, with red bands. The foot artillery wears the *képi*, the horse artillery the shako.

The French artillery has at its disposal excellent draught-animals. The races of Bourbonnais, the Ardennes and Brittany furnish horses somewhat better suited for country work, but whose strength and endurance leave nothing to desire.

The arms of the men are the saber and revolver for the drivers and gunners on horseback, the musket and saber-bayonet for the gunners on foot.

The French cannon holds indisputably the first rank in Europe. Roumania, and more recently England, have recognized, after examination, that the system of Barège—the barrel fitting to the chamber with a screw, common to field, siege, and fortress pieces—is much preferable to the Coin system employed by

DRAGOONS.

the Germans. The field *matériel*, the mounted battery of ninety, throwing a projectile of eight kilograms, and the horse battery of eighty, are perhaps a little heavy; but their projectile qualities compensate largely for this inconvenience. It is especially in the construction of projectiles that the French have shown themselves superior. Their shells, with balls and with grape-shots, produce frightful results. Their spreading fuse is excellent. Let the day come when they succeed in introducing into their cartridges for cannon their smokeless powder, and the result of a duel with the German artillery would not be doubtful.

CUIRASSIER TRUMPETER.

The engineers number four regiments, three of five battalions and one of four, making nineteen battalions, corresponding to the nineteen army corps. They are the only arm of the service which is not stationary in time of peace upon the territory of the corps to which they may be temporarily attached. At the time of mobilization each battalion assigns three companies to the corps, the fourth remaining in reserve for the strongholds. Two railway batteries, attached to the engineers, are established at Versailles. The engineers of the territorial troops number eighteen battalions, comprising sixty-one companies.

The wagon trains number twenty squadrons, each of three companies. To these must be added nine native companies in Algeria, four in Tunis, three in Tonquin. The territorial train would form eighteen squadrons of two companies. The train service attends to the movement of the subsistence wagons, ambulances and field hospitals, post and treasure wagons, and telegraphic sections of the *corps d'armée*. All these services, train workmen of the administration, secretaries, attendants of the sick, are amply provided in France. Excellent judges have even thought that there are too many of them, to the detriment of the combatants. For the railway trains and telegraphic service the French have very efficiently appealed to the genius and devotion of the civil administration. The large companies control their agents bound to the military service, and can form in a few days nine technical sections of railway workmen, each one thousand one hundred and sixty-five men strong, and eighteen telegraph sections of the first line, without counting some sections of the second line and way stations.

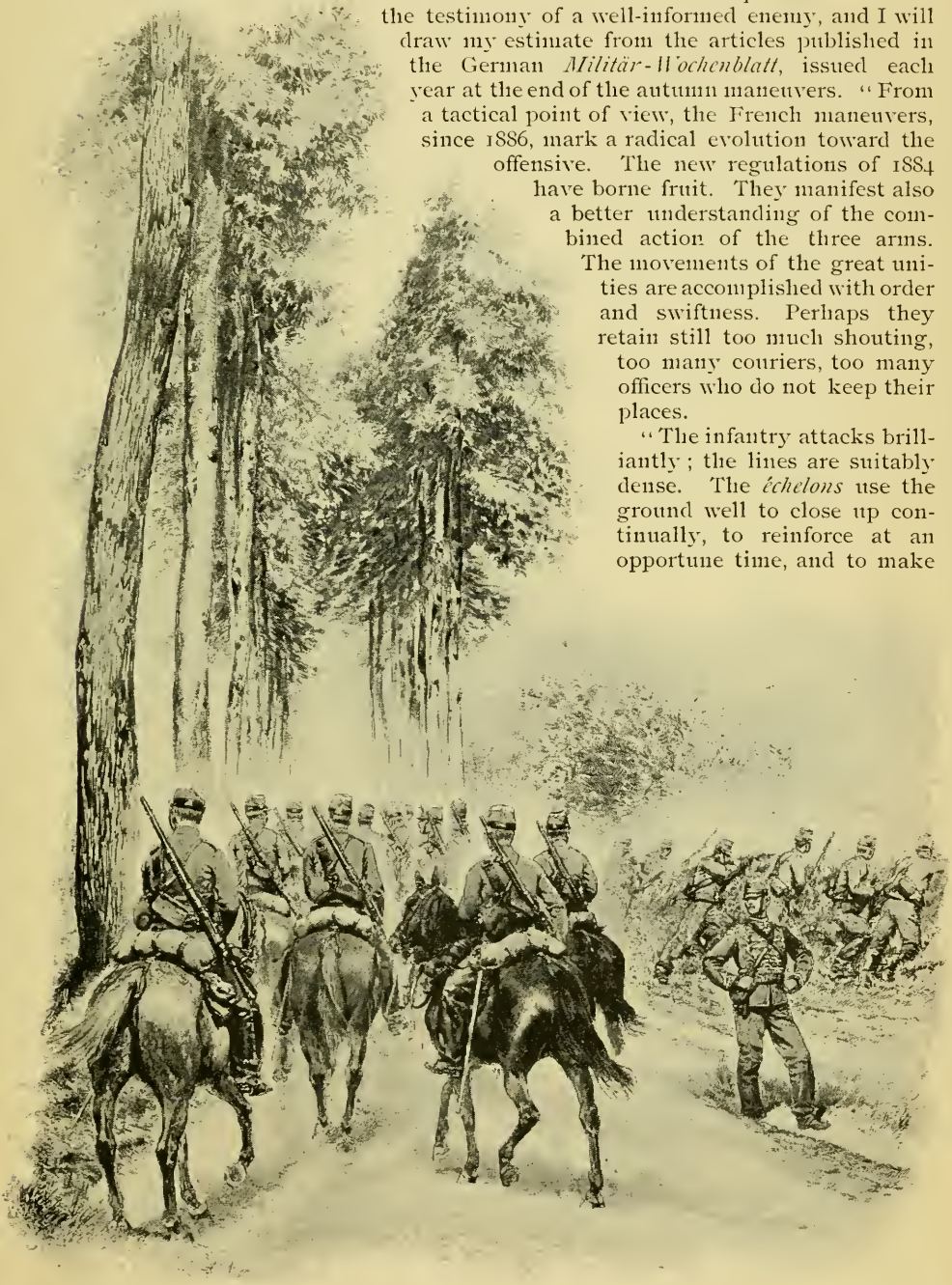
The touchstone of the army, awaiting the supreme trial of war, is in the autumn maneuvers. Introduced into France since 1874, they showed at the start the uncertainty connected with all first efforts, and that sort of timidity which has been cause for reproach in the rules of exercises adopted in 1875.

The anxiety shown to avoid waste, and an abnormal tendency toward the defensive, seemed to have caused the French to depart from their true traditions. They deployed in irregular and waving lines of thinly-scattered sharpshooters; their too numerous *échelons* of reinforcements, supports, and reserves followed at too great a distance, supported weakly, and never came up in time for assault. The artillery chose their first positions well, but did not budge afterward. Moreover, the whole machine seemed hard to move. The transition from the order to mass to the order of battle was effected with slowness, the great unities were not sufficiently supple, and the whole appeared destitute of life and offensive energy. It is said that Dragomirow, being present

at one of these maneuvers, styled them not maneuvers of attack, but maneuvers of promenade.

Since these beginnings the French have made surprising progress, and they could to-day, without boasting, deny the correctness of this judgment by a friend rather too severe. I ask no other proof of this than the testimony of a well-informed enemy, and I will draw my estimate from the articles published in the German *Militär-Wochenblatt*, issued each year at the end of the autumn maneuvers. "From a tactical point of view, the French maneuvers, since 1886, mark a radical evolution toward the offensive. The new regulations of 1884 have borne fruit. They manifest also a better understanding of the combined action of the three arms. The movements of the great unities are accomplished with order and swiftness. Perhaps they retain still too much shouting, too many couriers, too many officers who do not keep their places.

"The infantry attacks brilliantly; the lines are suitably dense. The *échelons* use the ground well to close up continually, to reinforce at an opportune time, and to make



HUSSARS.

the final effort. The firing discipline is appreciably improving. Let me add that the French foot-soldier, who has been so much reproached for using his weapon badly in 1870, actually fires one hundred cartridges each year, without counting those fired from the shooting trench. The practice of war-firing in the regiments and the multiplication of shooting stands and societies about the country are also elements of progress."

The *Militär-Wochenblatt* willingly recognizes that the condition of the French infantry is good. It praises the artillery unreservedly:

"The batteries take position with remarkable quickness, separate, and support attacks with great energy; well mounted, they pass everywhere, and boldly surmount the most serious obstacle. The cavalry alone seems inferior to its task, in both the service of exploration and actual engagement."

Here I may venture to contradict a statement plainly not disinterested. Certainly, the French cavalry is not above criticism; but it must be conceded that, under the direction of General Gallifet, it has singularly improved. Its rules are excellent, the men better mounted, and its horses spirited. I do not believe that it disputes the first rank with our Russian dragoons and Cossacks; and I should see without apprehension its ninety-one regiments measure their strength with the ninety-three German regiments. This arm has, to inspire it in war, its glorious records at Woerth, at Rezonville, at Sedan, which it could not possibly fall short of.

SPAHI.

Let me note an aspect of the maneuvers, which the *Wochenblatt* has entirely neglected, and which is worth noticing. I speak of the marching discipline. I have seen with astonishment that the French—such bad marchers in Italy and in 1870—have recovered, at one bound, all their natural qualities, those which suit active war.

Their long columns of a division or an army corps form in perfect order without previous massing. These columns advance without break, and pass, without stopping, a considerable number of halting-places. The fatigue caused by the march and by the too narrow space in which an army is quartered is certainly greater than in the German maneuvers. The French soldier, including the "reserve," gains honor from that fact. This is perhaps his greatest mark of progress and the pledge of his future success.

The French soldier—if we may use this comprehensive term (a military writer designates him as the foot-soldier, the artillery man, the cavalry man; for us all are comprised in one type, *the soldier*)—may be recognized on the other side of the Atlantic. He is the soldier of Lafayette, the soldier of Montcalm, whom Cooper has so well described, with his faults, his gayety, his petulance, and, by contrast, so many sympathetic qualities. The qualities have not changed at all, in spite of so many vicissitudes. He has the same animation, the same jollity, the same indifference to the morrow. Less talkative perhaps, and, above all, less contented with themselves, the French of our day have proved at Formosa and at Tuyen that they are endowed with a tenacity unappreciated. They have revealed, in addition, a new virtue among them,—modesty in heroism.

A BATTERY OF ARTILLERY.

Too intelligent and too sharp for chiefs of mediocre capacity, they are, in my opinion, capable of the greatest things when well commanded. Who, then, will be their chiefs? Who will understand how to lead them?

The officer in France is only a variety of the type of soldier. He comes from the same strata of society. There is no distinction of class, and scarcely any vestiges of the ancient and valiant military aristocracy. After the war, the French officer was rather a scapegoat. The conqueror and conquered censured him for his ignorance, his taste for the *café*, his presumption. Without stopping to refute certain exaggerations in the charges, let me affirm that, to-day, the officer has some right to praise. He has got a new skin, if even he has not completely metamorphosed himself.

Very attentive to his daily duties, which are notably heavy, he still finds time to read a good deal, to write considerably,—some would say too much. Innumerable military publications, some of which are first-class, such as the "*Revue de l'Étranger*," afford proof of his intellectual activity.

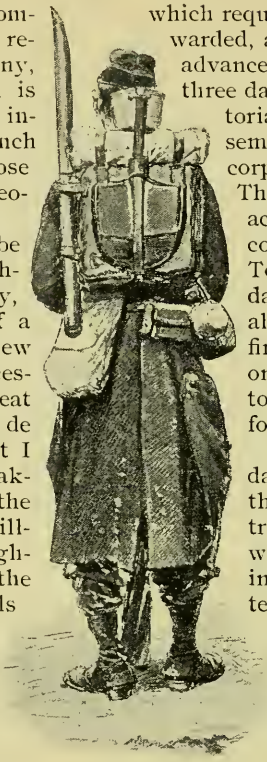
The well-educated officer is not rare in France. But are the initiative faculty, the search for new responsibilities, the talent for command,—are all those qualities of character, which one finds naturally in aristocracies, as common as education among these military *parvenus?* A doubt may be permitted, especially if one notes the mania for making regulations which rages in France, and is hardly favorable to the free expansion of individuality.

This doubt disappears before some great figures, whom I may be pardoned for naming. Mention should first be made of General Saussier, who, since the peace, has been military Governor of Paris, the most important command in the army. He has rendered great services to his country in the past, and, still active and young—barely sixty-one—can be relied on, if need be, to render great services in the future. The whole country puts the utmost confidence in his rare integrity of character.

His chief of staff, General de Mirabel,

is worthy of having such a commander. He won no slight renown in 1870, at Champigny, Bourget, and Buzenval, and is considered one of the best instructed officers of the French army, as well as one of those most versed in the great theories of war.

Next to these two must be placed the Frenchest of Frenchmen, the restorer of the cavalry, one who unites the fire of a *sabreur* with the breadth of view and strategic intelligence necessary to the conduct of a great cavalry corps,—the Marquis de Gallifet. Space fails, and yet I can not pass on without speaking of the five inspectors of the army: General Billot, the brilliant commander of the eighteenth corps; Baron Berye, the great artilleryman, who rivals Mirabel in all that constitutes the great soldier; General Davout, Duke of Auerstädt, the inheritor of one of the purest glories of the First Empire; General Thomassin, the hero of Fröshwiller; and, lastly, General de Bellemarre. With such men in command, France may look forward serenely to all eventualities.



A SAPPER.

Let us suppose the moment of legitimate vindication for France has arrived. The order to move is transmitted by telegraph and by means of placards to the remotest parts of France. Two days pass, and already the whole independent cavalry is at the frontier. They begin the work of defense and exploration, sustained in the rear by the sixty-six active battalions reinforced, which are stationed upon the territory of the sixth corps, between Sedan and Belfort. At the same time, all through the country, the reserves rejoin their regiments. The little book they have received from the authorities indicates their destination and takes the place of a railway ticket. Everything is ready to receive them. Their effects are labeled with their names. The journal of mobilization of the corps foretells long in advance the whole detail of operations. The columns of horses, for which requisition has been made, are forwarded, and follow routes regulated in advance in each army corps. Two or three days after the reserves, the territorial contingents commence to assemble. On the fourth day the corps brigade of cavalry can start. The same day the regiments of active infantry have their full complement with their wagons. Toward the sixth or seventh day the artillery has mobilized all its batteries; the train, its first rank of administrative wagons. The eighth day the territorial army is formed and can follow the movement.

From the fifth to the eleventh day the transportation of everything required by the concentration of the troops is effected, without interruption, conforming to the time-tables and written plans made in time of peace. Ten railways, like so many streams with a continuous and regular course, incessantly increase this human tide which beats at the feet of the cliffs of the Meuse. As each railway line transports two corps, and it takes three days to transport one corps, all the nineteen corps constituting the active army of France can, before the evening of the eleventh day, be landed in the zone of concentration.

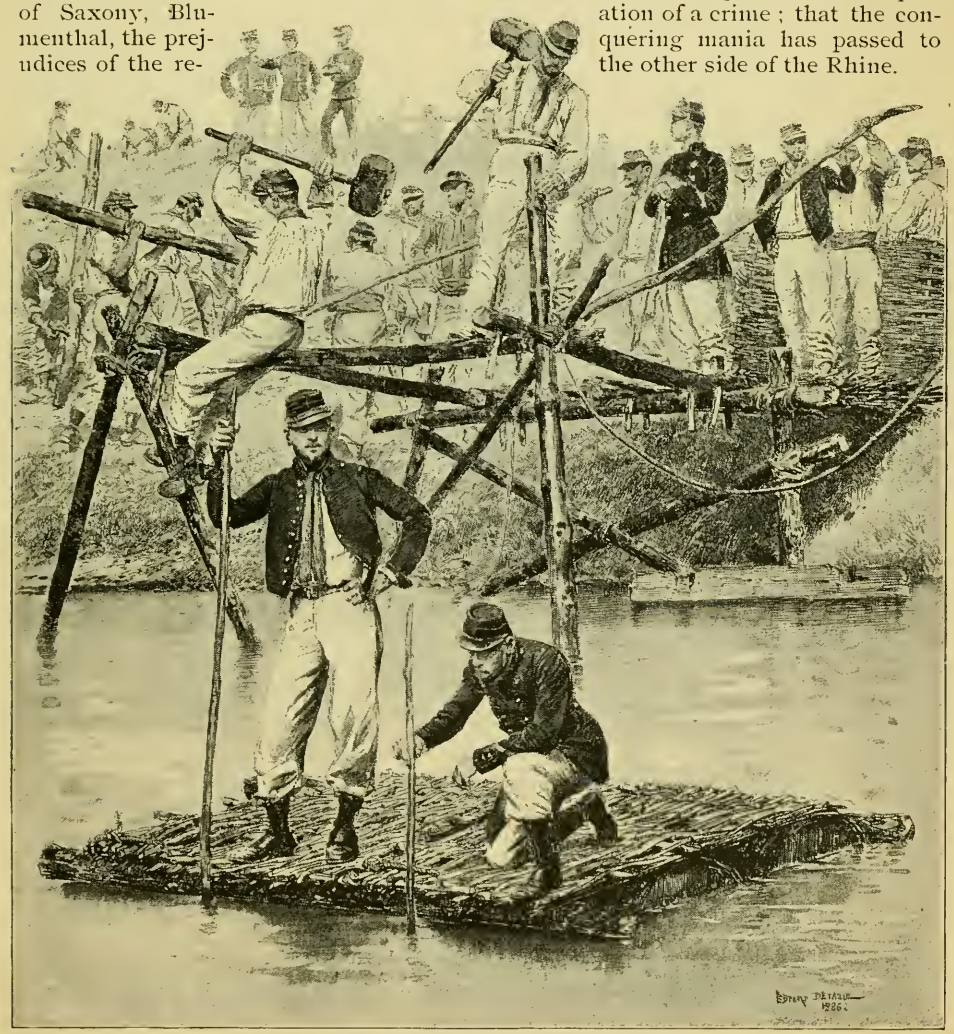
This is no romance. The country has expended very nearly seven or eight million francs to make it a beautiful and sound reality. What has been so well realized upon the territory of the seventeenth corps can be accomplished in the same manner in other regions.

The nine classes of the active army and its reserves give in time of war one million soldiers who have served five years, and three hundred thousand who have served one year,—in all one million three hundred thousand men ready to take the field at once. These same classes offer, besides, four hundred and eighty thousand exempt men, scattered, of which two hundred and eighty-one thousand alone have received a brief instruction and can be used at the *dépôts*.

Certainly, France has organized masses

and chiefs capable of moving them. But she has not a political situation which permits her taking the initiative in a declaration of war. With her, everything is submitted to the discussion of a parliament; at her neighbor's, everything passes in the silence of the Imperial Cabinet, and, by this alone, Germany can gain twenty-four hours in its concentration. Political preoccupations have prevented the French from organizing their high command. In the presence of a compact nation, where the sovereign is the *generalissimo*, where the armies are inspected and commanded by the princes or by the marshals, Prince Albert, George of Saxony, Blumenthal, the prejudices of the republican spirit have tolerated only nameless chiefs. It is on the declaration of war alone, at the moment when the storm will have already burst, that the pilot will take the helm. The *generalissimo* and his chief of staff will assume in this critical moment the functions of the minister and the chief of the general staff.

Invincible henceforth in the defensive, France should protect herself from all impatience. Let her continue to reinforce, and Europe will end by rendering homage to her manly wisdom. It will be noted that she has ceased to be belligerent while remaining warlike; that she does not pursue conquest, but the reparation of a crime; that the conquering mania has passed to the other side of the Rhine.



PONTONIERS.

The whole world will recognize some day that Germany, in going out of her way, has caused civilization to retrograde two centuries. The country of Goethe, of Humboldt, of Heine,—the Germany of Madame de Staël,—has, without doubt, the right to form itself into one nation, but not by fraud and violence. Schleswig, Hanover, Alsace-Lorraine above all, will witness against her before the indefeasible justice of history; and when Russia shall give the impetus, all the weary nations will desert the victor, whom they applaud to-day.

EBB AND FLOW.

By Anna Vernon Dorsey.

There is peace in respite from love:
  Such as the winds must know
Sleeping, hushed, in the depths above;
  And the sea when the tides are low
    In lethargy.

Burns deep in the quiet a pain:
  Winds awake from their swoon
Moaning to roam the earth again;
  Restless, the waters seek the moon,
    And my heart—thee.

FOOL'S GOLD

By Edith M. Thomas

I

For gold they delved the rugged mountain side,
  For gold they washed the yellow river sand;
  With hope, and gleaming ore, the grizzled band
Took up their march across the desert wide.
The journey done, how did their fate deride!
  They laid their prize within the chymist's hand,
  With narrow gaze their prize the chymist scanned;
At last, "O men, it is fool's gold!" he cried.
Thou Genius of my much-deceivèd day,
  I doubt not—I who seek for Truth each where—
If some grim sage my treasure should assay,
  I'd fare as ill as did those miners fare!
But it may chance, before his word can slay,
  That gentle Death such detriment shall spare.

II

Into thine heart, O friend, I sank a shaft,
  And deemed I drew from thence a thousandfold.
  If aught thou yieldest me but native gold,
Conceal what thou hast done, with kindly craft.
I care not, I—who shall have frowned, or laughed,
  That I such dross for kingly metal hold:
  What matters, when my sunlit day is told,
And I have drained the long Lethean draught?
Then, while I live, thy wonted spell yet weave—
  Ay, while I live, of thee I do entreat,
If e'er thy lips, thine eyes, thine heart deceive,
  They shall deceive me still, in accents sweet.
If thou have mercy, to the lie still cleave,
  And leash the truth that runs with swift and cruel feet!

A HISTORY OF THE LAST QUARTER-CENTURY IN THE UNITED STATES

BY E. BENJAMIN ANDREWS

THE DOWNFALL OF THE CARPET-BAG RÉGIME

DESOLATION OF THE SOUTH
SOME HONEST CARPET-BAGGERS
ANARCHY IN SOUTH CAROLINA
CHAMBERLAIN'S REFORMS
FIGHTING IN ARKANSAS
THE POLAND REPORT
RIOTING AT VICKSBURG
OVERTHROW OF KELLOGG
SHERIDAN'S ATTITUDE
THE WHEELER ADJUSTMENT

THE war left the South in indescribable desolation. Great numbers of Confederates came home to find their farms sold for unpaid taxes, perhaps mortgaged to ex-slaves. The best Southern land, after the war, was worth but a trifle of its old value. Even city real estate was a drug. Many their ruin rendered insane; in multitudes more it broke down all energy. The braver spirits—men to whom till now all toil had been strange—set to work as clerks, depot-masters, and agents of various business enterprises. High-born ladies, widowed by Northern bullets, became teachers or governesses. In the comparatively few cases where families retained their estates, their effort to keep up appearances was pathetic. One by one domestics were dismissed; dinner-parties grew rare; stately coaches lost their paint and became rickety; carriage and saddle horses were worn out at the plough and replaced by mules. At last the master learned to open his own gates, the mistress to do her own cooking.

Upon the whites, in many communities, a kind of moral and social stagnation settled down, an unhealthy, hopeless acquiescence in the worst that might come. Politics they long regarded with abhorrence, as the accursed thing that had brought on the war. Whites, as well as negroes, drank recklessly. Few of any class cared much for education. In 1874 Alabama had 380,000 citizens who could neither read nor write, of whom more than 100,000 were white. Yet the year before, the public schools in that State, except in the larger cities, had been closed because the State could not pay the teachers. If, to the Africans, education was freer after the war than before, turmoil and poverty left the young Southerners of paler skin little time or disposition for schooling. The determination, when it came, of the Southern whites to rule, sad as were the atrocities to which it led, was a good sign, marking the end of a lethargy which boded naught but ill to any.

The South had still, as always, a class of swaggering whites, the kind who earlier said that "the Yankees would back up against the North Pole before they would fight." Once previous to the war, Hon. John C. Breckenridge, of Kentucky, journeying from New Orleans to Washington, passed through South Carolina. He subsequently related his experience. "But one man," he said, "boarded the cars on the route through that unpopulous piny-wooded land. He was dressed in full regimen-

tals, and entered the smoking-car with the mien of a Cambyses or a Murat. I joined this splendid soldier in the smoking-car. I offered him a fresh cigar to engage him in conversation, and began to question him. 'May I ask,' said I, meekly, 'what is going on in this State?' Tossing his head in proud disdain, he replied: 'Going on, suh? We won't stand it no mo', suh! The Governor has sent for his staff to meet with him and consult about it in Columbia, suh! I am one of his staff, suh! We won't stand it any longer, suh! No, suh! It is intolerable, suh! No, suh!' 'Stand what?' I asked, in surprise, not unmixed with dread. 'What is going on?' He answered: 'Stand the encroachments on our Southern institutions, suh! The abolitionists must be crushed, suh! We will do it, suh! South Carolina is ready, suh!'"*

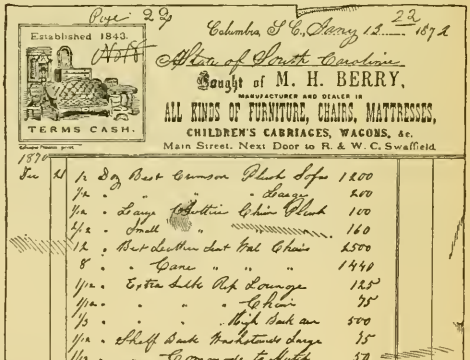
In reconstruction times Southern heroes of this stamp turned up as scalawags.

Soon after the reconstruction of his State, at a public meeting in celebration of the event, Wade Hampton advised the blacks to seek political affiliation with the best native whites, as both races equally wished order and prosperity restored. Beverly Nash, colored, addressed the meeting, urging the same. His people, he said, recognized the Southern white man as their "true friend," and he wished all the Confederates re-enfranchised. In this temper colored men formed the Union Republican party of South Carolina, and adopted a platform free from rancor.

GOOD AND BAD CARPET-BAGGERS

Unfortunately, such chance for affiliation was lost. Causes were at work which soon lessened Sambo's respect for "Old Massa," and "Old Massa's" for Sambo. Republicans from the North flocked to the South, whom the blacks, viewing them as representing the emancipation party, naturally welcomed and followed. There were honest carpet-baggers, no doubt, but most such were idealists, little likely to reconcile the races, nearly certain to be misled by their shrewd but unprincipled colleagues. The good and the bad alike did their best to inflame the negro's sense of independence and to engage him in politics. His former wrongs were dwelt upon and the ballot held up as a providential means of righting them. The negro was too apt a pupil. "The reformers complain of taxes being too high," said Beverly Nash in 1874, after he had become State Senator; "I tell you that they are not high enough. I want them taxed until they put those lands back where they belong, into the hands of those who worked for them. You worked for them; you labored for them and were sold to pay for them, and you ought to have them."

The tendency of such exhortation was most vicious. In their days of serfdom the negroes' besetting sin had been thievery. Now that the opportunities for this were multiplied, the fear of punishment gone, and the carpet-bagger at hand to encourage it, the prevalence of public and private stealing was not strange. The colored legislators of South Carolina furnished the State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Columbia S. C., Jany 13 22 1872

State of South Carolina

Established 1843.

TERMS CASH.

Bought of M. H. BERRY,

MANUFACTURER AND DEALER IN

ALL KINDS OF FURNITURE, CHAIRS, MATTRESSES,

CHILDREN'S CABRIAGES, WAGONS, &c.

Main Street. Next Door to R. & W. C. Swaffield

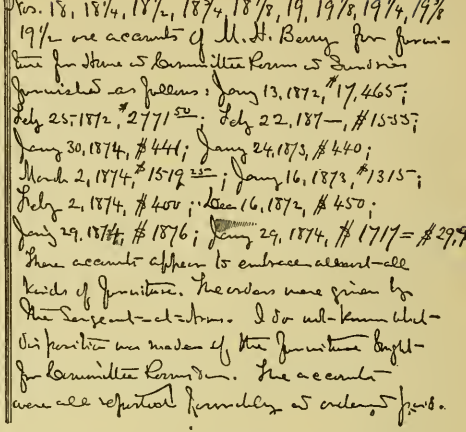
1870				
Jan	21	1/2 Doz Best Crimson Plush Sofas	1200	
		1/2 " " " Lounges	800	
		1/2 " Large Cushion Chairs Plush	100	
		1/2 " Small "	160	
		12 " Best Cushion seat Rail Chairs	1500	
		8 " " Cane " " "	1440	
		1/2 " Extra Silk Rep Lounges	125	
		1/2 " " " " Chairs	75	
		1/3 " " " High Back arm	500	
		1/2 " Shaff Back Washstands Large	75	
		1/2 " " Commodes to Match	50	
		1 " Marble Washstands	600	
		1 " Commodes to Match	500	
		1 " Hat Rack & Umbrella Stands	310	
		3 1/3 " Best Real Decks Extra Lates	3500	
		Library Clock Case	1075	
		1/2 " Large Library Arch Case Extra	175	
		1/3 " Oval Library Table Carved Legs	1250	
		1/4 " Office Desks	250	
		1/4 " Bureaus	300	
		1/2 " Cane Back Swivel Office chairs	200	
		1 " French Lounges Green Rep	720	
		1/4 " Stripe Best Silk Rep	250	
		1/4 " Folding Chairs	100	
		Upholstering Speakers Desk	100	
Feby	26	Fitting up Committee Rooms	1500	$17945 00

Facsimile of a Bill for Furnishing the State House at Columbia, S. C., in 1872.

* S. S. Cox: Three Decades of Federal Legislation.

House with gorgeous clocks at $480 each, mirrors at $750, and chandeliers at $650. Their own apartments were a barbaric display of gewgaws, carpets, and upholstery. The minority of a congressional committee recites that "these ebony statesmen" purchased a lot of imported china cuspidors at $8 apiece, while senators and representatives "at the glorious capital of the nation" had to be "content with a plain earthenware article of domestic manufacture." The contingent funds voted in South Carolina during the six years before 1875, aggregated $376,000. The bills for public printing during the same years ran up to $1,104,000—for three years of that time amounting to a thousand dollars a day.

Of the Palmetto State Solons in 1873 an eye-witness wrote: "They are as quick as lightning at points of order, and they certainly make incessant and extraordinary use of their knowledge. No one is allowed to talk five minutes without interruption, and one interruption is the signal for another and another, until the original speaker is smothered under an avalanche of them. Forty questions of privilege will be raised in a day. At times nothing goes on but alternating questions of order and of privilege. The inefficient colored friend who sits in the Speaker's chair cannot suppress this extraordinary element in the debate. Some of the blackest members exhibit a pertinacity in raising these points of order and questions of privilege that few white men can equal. Their struggles to get the floor, their bellowings and physical contortions, baffle description. The

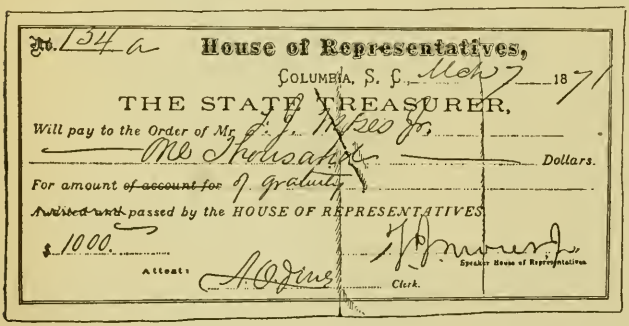

Nos. 18, 18¼, 18½, 18¾, 18⅞, 19, 19⅛, 19¼, 19⅜ 19½ are accounts of M. H. Berry for furniture for House of Representatives & Committee Room & furniture furnished as follows: Jany 13, 1872, $17,465; Feby 25, 1872, $2771 50; Feby 22, 187—, $1555; Jany 30, 1874, $441; Jany 24, 1873, $440; March 2, 1874, $1519 25; Jany 16, 1873, $1315; Feby 2, 1874, $400; Dec 16, 1872, $450; Jany 29, 1874, $1876; Jany 29, 1874, $1717 = $29,945 50. These accounts appear to embrace almost all kinds of furniture. The orders were given by the Sergeant-at-Arms. I do not know what disposition was made of the furniture bought for Committee Room. The accounts were all reported formally & orders & proved.

Summary of the Amounts Paid to One Firm for Furniture by the South Carolina Legislature of 1872–74.

From the Report of the Investigating Committee.

Speaker's hammer plays a perpetual tattoo, all to no purpose. The talking and interruptions from all quarters go on with the utmost license. Everyone esteems himself as good as his neighbor, and puts in his oar, apparently as often for love of riot and confusion as for anything else. The Speaker orders a member, whom he has discovered to be particularly unruly, to take his seat; the member obeys, and with the same motion that he sits down, throws his feet on to his desk, hiding himself from the Speaker by the soles of his boots."

Around the State House, during the session of a Legislature in which were colored representatives, a dense crowd of open-mouthed negroes would stand, rain or shine, and stare at the walls from hour to hour, day after day. In one State election in South Carolina, Judge Carpenter, an old South Carolinian and a Republican, ran in opposition to the carpet-bag candidate. Against him it was charged that if he were elected he would re-enslave the blacks, or that, failing in this, he would not allow their wives and daughters to wear hoop-skirts. Another judge was threat-


No. 134 a House of Representatives,
Columbia, S. C., March 7 1871
THE STATE TREASURER,
Will pay to the Order of Mr. J. J. Moses Jr.
One Thousand Dollars.
For amount ~~of account for~~ of gratuity
~~Audited and~~ passed by the HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
$1000.
Attest: A. Dine, Clerk.
J. P. Moore, Speaker House of Representatives

Facsimile of a "Gratuity" Voted to Governor Moses by the South Carolina Legislature in 1871.

The South Carolina Legislature of 1873 Passing an Appropriation Bill.

ened with impeachment and summoned before the Legislature above described, because he had "made improper reflections on a colored woman of doubtful character."

How baneful the doings of such lawmakers were in the South is partly revealed by the accompanying table.

By 1874, in most Southern States, the carpet-bag governments had succumbed. Such States were well on the way to order and prosperity, though breaches of the peace still occurred there oftener than in the North.

DEBTS AND LIABILITIES OF THE SOUTHERN STATES.

	At Close of War.	After Reconstruction.	Increase.
Alabama....	$5,939,654.87	$38,381,967.37	$32,442,312.50
Arkansas....	4,036,952.87	19,761,265.62	15,724,312.75
Florida.....	221,000.00	15,763,447.54	15,542,447.54
Georgia	nominal.	50,137,500.00	50,137,500.00
Louisiana...	10,099,074.34	50,540,206.61	40,341,132.27
N. Carolina..	9,699,500.00	34,887,467.85	25,187,967.85
S. Carolina..	5,000,000.00	39,158,914.47	34,158,914.47
Mississippi..	nominal.	20,000,000.00	20,000,000.00
Tennessee ..	20,105,606.66	45,688,263.46	25,582,656.80
Texas.....	nominal.	20,361,000.00	20,361,000.00
Virginia	31,938,144.59	45,480,54.221	13,542,397.62
Total	$87,139,933.33	$380,160,575.13	$293,020,641.80

See Congressional Record, first session Fifty-first Congress, D. 6566.

From Alabama, in particular, came startling reports of terrorism. They had some foundation, but were greatly exaggerated by interested or ill-informed persons. In a letter to Hon. Joseph R. Hawley, Hon. Charles Hayes wrote of one Allen as having been beaten by ruffians and threatened with death if he "didn't keep his mouth shut about that d——d Yankee, Billings," who had been assassinated. To a New York *Tribune* correspondent Allen said he had been assaulted by a solitary gentleman, armed only with the weapons of nature, who scratched his face. "Massacred" persons often denied that they had been hurt at all. Such violence as did occur by no means always proceeded from whites. It is well authenticated that colored Democrats were maltreated by colored Republicans. The blacks were often unfriendly to whites, even when these were Republicans. It is quite true that where negroes had lost their political power they received little consideration. Sixteen were taken from a jail in Tennessee and shot by a band of masked horsemen, their bodies being left in the road. The Governor offered a reward for the apprehension of the murderers, when one turned State's evidence and told everything. The others were at once arrested; whether punished does not appear.

W. Beverly Nash.

South Carolina, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana were, in 1874, still under carpet-bag sway. Their nearly complete deliverance therefrom during this year and the next forms the subject of the following paragraphs.

In a letter written so early as 1871, General Sherman says:

"I told Grant plainly that the South would go against him *en masse*, though he counts on South Carolina, Louisiana, and Arkansas. I repeated my conviction that all that was vital in the South was against him; that negroes were generally quiescent and could not be relied on as voters when local questions became mixed up with political matters." This was an exact forecast of the actual event in all the States named. In each a reform faction of white Republicans grew up, disgusted with carpet-bag corruption and unwilling longer to limit their political creed to the single article of negro rights. In the face of this quarrel negroes became bewildered and scattered, or withheld their votes, while the Democrats walked into power.

Charles Hayes, of Alabama.

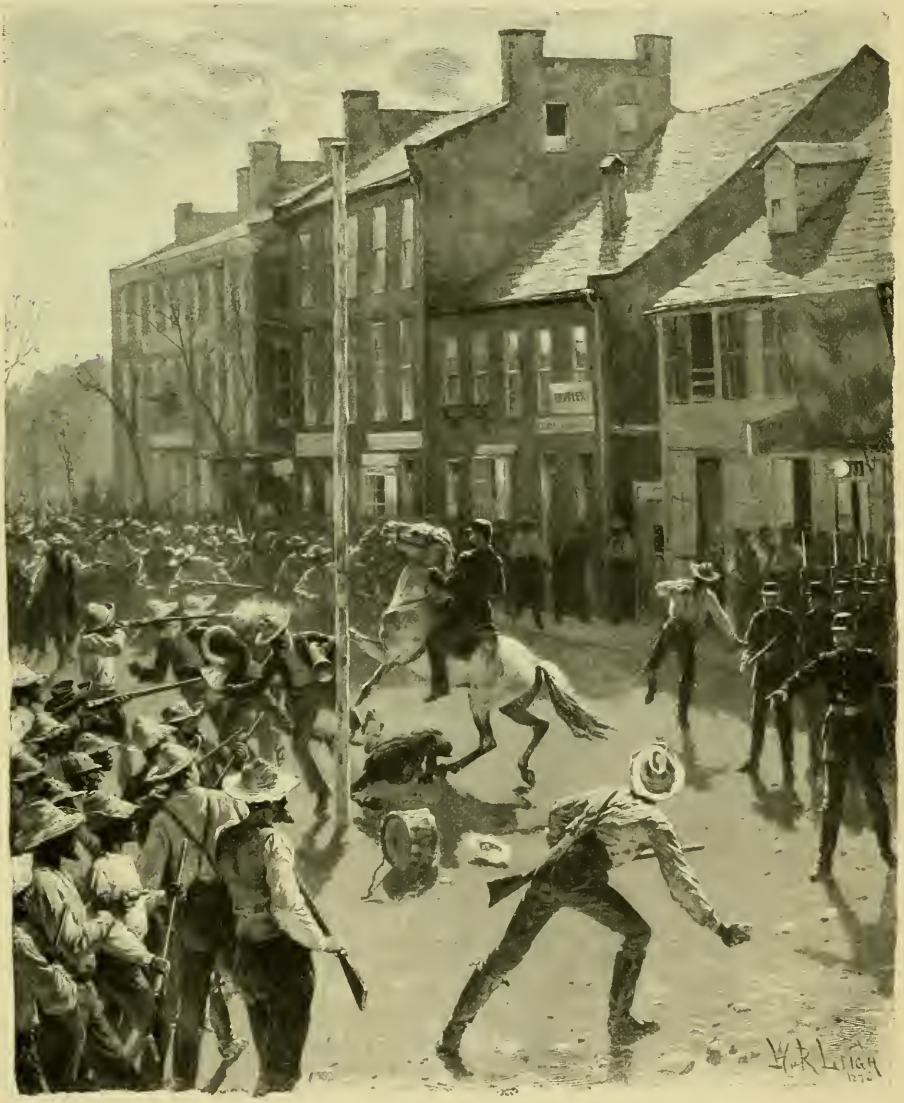
THE TAX BURDEN IN SOUTH CAROLINA

The Carpet-bag Legislature of South Carolina guaranteed $6,000,000 in railroad bonds to subsidize the Greenville & Columbia and the Blue Ridge Railroads, taking mortgages on the roads to cover the amount. Rings of carpet-baggers and native speculators obtained legislation releasing the mortgages but continuing the State's liabilities. Seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars in fraudulent State bank-notes were approved and assumed by the State. Though property in general had lost four-fifths of its ante-bellum value, it paid on the average five times heavier taxes. In 1874, 146 square miles of land were sold for unpaid taxes, and 547 square miles forfeited to the State, some of the latter failing to bring twelve cents an acre. As in Arkansas and in Louisiana the Governor had dangerously

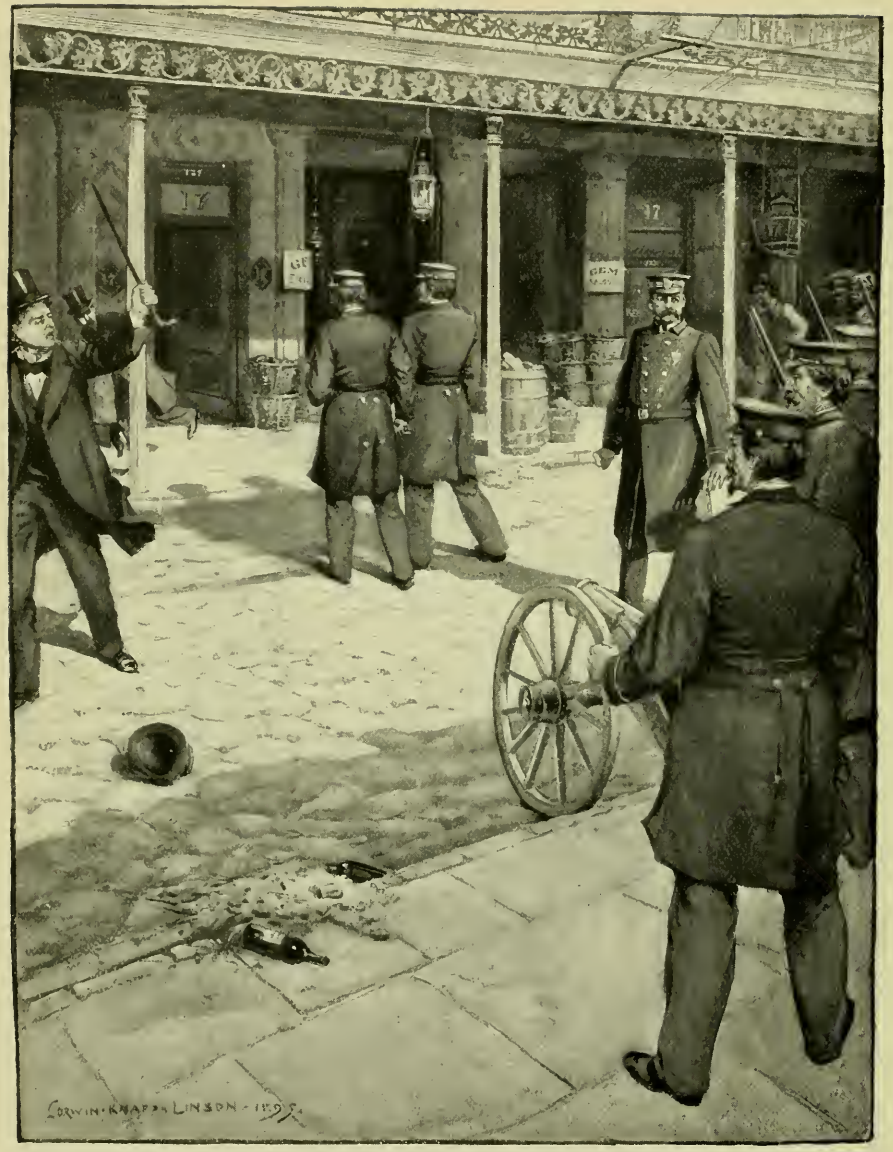
Daniel H. Chamberlain.

great patronage. Negro felons were pardoned by wholesale for political purposes. Undeserving white convicts could be ransomed for money. Of the three justices on the Supreme Bench one was a carpet-bagger and one a negro. Juries were composed of illiterate and degraded men.

In March, 1874, a committee of the South Carolina Taxpayers' Union waited on President Grant with complaints. He expressed regret at the anarchic condition of South Carolina, but said that as the State government was in complete working order the federal authority was powerless. This appeal, however, favorably affected public opinion. "It shows," said one journal, "that the South cherishes no sullen hostility." Antipathy toward Southerners slowly changed to sympathy. Mr. Elliott, a colored Congressman from South Carolina, warned his constituents that the doings of the State Republicans were



The Beginning of the Conflict in Front of the Anthony House, Little Rock, subsequent to Baxter's Speech to the Colored Regiment.



General Badger in Front of the Gem Saloon, New Orleans.*

disapproved by the party in the Nation.

In 1874 the South Carolina Republicans quarrelled. After a hot contest the regular convention nominated Hon. D. H. Chamberlain for Governor, Moses, his predecessor, being set aside. Chamberlain was a native of Massachusetts, a graduate of Yale and of the Harvard Law School, who had commanded a regiment of colored cavalry in the war. He was a polished gentleman and an able lawyer. War ended, he became a citizen of South Carolina in time to sit in its Constitutional Convention. The Independent Republicans bolted, and put up for Governor Judge John T. Green, a native South Carolinian, to

* On January 10, 1872, General A. S. Badger, under orders from Governor Warmoth, marched to the Gem Saloon in Royal Street, and demanded the surrender of the Carter Legislature which had made its headquarters there.

whose standard rallied the entire "reform" element of the State, whether Conservative or Republican.

The Chamberlain ticket was elected. In his inaugural address Governor Chamberlain marked out an able scheme of retrenchment and reform, soon showing, to the astonishment of all, and to the dismay of his supporters, that he was in earnest with it. The enormous power given the executive, apparently that he might abuse it, enabled Chamberlain, spite of his party allies, to effect sweeping improvements. He supplanted dishonest officials with men of integrity, Republicans, if such were available, if not, Democrats. He vetoed corrupt jobs and firmly withheld pardons. Ex-Governor Moses and the infamous Whipper, elected by the Legislature to the Circuit Bench, he refused to commission. Good jurors were selected, and crime and race hatred wonderfully diminished. Like the English in Ireland, Governor Chamberlain learned that an abstractly good government over a community may fit the community very ill. Carpet-bagger, scalawag, and negro, however well intentioned and wisely led, could not in the nature of the case rule South Carolina well. Nevertheless his praiseworthy effort hastened the advent of order by revealing the nature of the evils which needed reforming.

FIGHTING IN ARKANSAS

Arkansas was another of the States where exotic government died extremely hard. Its persistence there was due to the strong Union sentiment which had always existed north of the Arkansas River. The State's colored vote was only a quarter of the whole, but was potent in combination with the large white vote which remained Republican till shamed into change. In this State, such were the traditions and training of its citizens, neither faction readily gave way. Many Arkansas people cared little for law. The story goes that a steamboat passenger on an Arkansas river was once approached by a native who told him that he had the night before "been on a frolic with the boys," and in witness thereof showed the passenger a pocketful of human ears.

Augustus H. Garland

The conflict in Arkansas was between the Liberal-Republicans, called "Brindle-tails," led by James Brooks, and the Radical-Republicans, headed by Baxter. Chief-Justice McClure, nicknamed "Poker Jack," and the United States Senators, Clayton and Dorsey, sided with Baxter. The returns of the 1872 election seemed to make Baxter Governor, but Brooks alleged fraud and sought by every means to change the result. He appealed to the United States Court for a *quo warranto* against Baxter, but it declined to assume jurisdiction in the case; the State Supreme Court also declined. The Legislature could have authorized a contest, but refused to do so. Not disheartened, Brooks sued for and secured from the Circuit Court of Pulaski County, April 15, 1874, a judgment of "ouster" against Baxter, took forcible possession of the State House, and held it with cannon and some hundred and fifty men. Next day Baxter proclaimed martial law, marched two hundred partisans of his into Little Rock and surrounded the State-House. The Federal forces, while neutral, enjoined Brooks from precipitating an armed collision. Re-inforcements from both sides constantly

Chief-Justice John McClure.

Elisha Baxter.

Joseph Brooks.

came in, making Little Rock for the time a military camp.

A body of Baxter's colored supporters, applauding some utterance of his, were fired into—accidentally, as was said. Indiscriminate shooting ensued, with sanguinary results. Federal forces had to quell the disturbance. Excitement was undiminished until the end of April, breaches of the peace being frequent, though no general engagement occurred. On April 30th took place an action in which Brooks suffered the loss of twenty-five men killed and wounded, some accounts say seventy-one. A week later, and again two days later still, there were sharp skirmishes. The streets of Little Rock were barricaded, and communication with the outside world much impeded. Meantime the agents of the two parties in Washington were engaged in legal and diplomatic fencing, but effort after effort at compromise proved abortive.

Neither side had an inspiring cause. In that poverty-stricken State offices were more numerous and fat than in any other commonwealth of the Union. By the Constitution of 1868 the Governor appointed to five hundred and twenty-six of these posts, besides creating all the justices of the peace and constables. Public expenditures, which, in six years, had amounted to $17,000,000, might, if properly looked after, be made a rich source of revenue to many. A cartoon of the period figured Arkansas as a woman in the grip of two remorseless brigands with pistols levelled at each other. The Legislature, convened by Baxter on the 11th of May, telegraphed for Federal interposition. Grant at once recognized Baxter and his Legislature, and ordered "all turbulent and disorderly persons to disperse."

But the end was not yet. The Poland Committee on Arkansas Affairs, appointed by the National House of Representatives, elicited the fact that Baxter and the leaders of his party, notably Clayton and Dorsey, were no longer on good terms. His disappointing integrity had lost Baxter his "pull" with the Senators and with the Arkansas Supreme Court, presided over by McClure. The following is from the evidence laid before the committee during the summer of 1874:

"*Q.* State what you know as to the origin of the difficulties between Governor Baxter and the leaders of the party that elected him.

"*A.* As I understood it at that time, it originated with an effort on the part of the Republican party proper to carry through the railroad bill. It originated with his opposition to this bill, or with his declaring that he would defeat it.

"*Q.* What was the nature of the bill?

"*A.* There had been $5,200,000 State-aid bonds issued, and the object of the bill was to make the State assume that indebtedness and take in lieu of it railroad bonds.

"*Q.* Was that considered a fair equivalent?

"*A.* It was considered that it would be of no value at all.

"*Q.* What was the general opinion of these bonds, that the State had the benefit of them, or the roads, or the individuals?

"*A.* The impression on the public mind is that the bonds were divided up between the managers of the different railroads."

Baxter's new attitude surprisingly quickened the Supreme Court's sense of jurisdiction. Two of its judges were kidnapped, but escaped, and four days before the Legislature convened, four of the five, though "feeling some delicacy" in doing so, reversed their former denial of jurisdiction, and on May 7, 1874, affirmed the decision of the Circuit Court in Brooks's favor.

The Legislature provided for a constitutional Convention to convene on July 14, 1874, an action overwhelmingly indorsed by the people at the next election. The new Constitution ratified 78,000 to 24,000 in October, swept the Governor's enormous patronage away, as also his power to declare martial law and to suspend *habeas corpus*. The tax-levying and debt-contracting functions of the Legislature were strictly hedged about. The number of offices was to be diminished and all were to be elective. Disfranchisements were abolished. The most important of all the changes related to

The Brooks Forces Evacuating the State House at Little Rock.

the Returning Board. The old Constitution had vested in this body extraordinary authority, like that given it by statute in Florida, South Carolina, and Louisiana. It designated three officers who were to receive all election returns, compile and count them, reject fraudulent and illegal votes, and in case of irregularities in the election, occasioned by fraud or fear in any county or precinct, to correct the result or to reject it and order a new election. The judicial part of this fearful sovereignty was now annulled.

The State Democracy, September 9, 1874, endorsed these changes as "just, liberal, and wise," and offered Baxter the nomination for Governor, which he refused. The opposition cried out that the State was betrayed into the hands of the Ku-klux and White Leagues, that Brooks was the true Governor, and that the new Constitution was revolutionary and void. They made no nominations under it, so that at the election of October 13, 1874, Garland, the Democratic nominee, was elected by a majority of 75,453 votes.

On February 6, 1875, the Poland Committee submitted to the House its report upon the Arkansas imbroglio. It stated that the new Arkansas Constitution was Republican in form and recommended non-interference, saying that while negro citizenship was not relished by the Southern people, few would do ought to disturb it, except certain lawless youths, who should be sternly dealt with. A minority report was signed by Jasper D. Ward, of Illinois, who had gone to Little Rock in company with Dorsey, and had during his entire stay remained at Dorsey's house, where he met few but Brooksites. The President took issue with the Poland Committee. In a special message, two days after its report, he expressed the opinion that Brooks was the legal Governor of Arkansas and the new Constitution revolutionary. Spite of this, however, the House adopted the Poland report, thus, in effect, ending the long broil and suspense Governor Garland at once proclaimed Thursday, March 25, 1875, a day of thanksgiving.

A CONFLICT BETWEEN WHITES AND NEGROES

Before light, on December 7, 1874, the white citizens of Vicksburg, Miss., were roused by the news that armed negroes were approaching the city. They sprang to arms and organized. Just outside the city limits a detachment of whites met a body of two hundred negroes and soon put them to rout, killing six, wounding several, and taking some prisoners. Almost at the

The Scene of the Conflict at the Pemberton Monument, near Vicksburg, December 7, 1874. The negroes were intrenched in the old Federal breastworks at the top of the hill.

same time a similar engagement was in progress near the monument where Pemberton surrendered to Grant in 1863. The man who headed the citizens says the conflict lasted only a few minutes. The negroes fled in wild disorder, leaving behind twenty killed and wounded. At still other points negro bands were charged upon and routed. By noon the war was over and on the following day business was resumed amid quiet and order. Three whites were killed and three wounded, while of the colored about seventy-five were killed and wounded and thirty or forty made prisoners.

Adalbert Ames.

The causes of this bloody affair were differently recited. An address published by the citizens of Vicksburg on December 12th alleged a series of frauds by certain colored county officials. Some of these had been indicted by a grand jury composed of ten colored and seven white men. Among the accused was George W. Davenport, clerk of the Court of Chancery and a member of the Board of Supervisors. The citizens further declared that the bonds of Sheriff and Tax Collector Crosby were worthless, and also that he had made away with incriminating records to save comrades of his who were under indictment. A mass-meeting was held, December 2d, and the accused officials asked to resign. Davenport fled the county; Crosby yielded. Soon, however, by an inflammatory handbill, over Crosby's name, in which the "Taxpayers" were named a mob of ruffians, barbarians, and political banditti, the colored people of the county were called upon to support him. It was rumored that a rising of blacks was imminent, though Crosby had disowned the pamphlet and promised to bid his adherents disperse. Governor Ames proclaimed a state of riot and disorder, and invoked the aid of all citizens in upholding the laws. Upon receipt of the Governor's proclamation the Mayor of Vicksburg issued a counter-manifesto asserting that the mass-meeting, which the Governor had denounced as riotous and as having driven the sheriff from his office, was a quiet and orderly gathering of taxpayers who, without arms or violence, had "requested the resignation of irresponsible officials." His Honor continued: "Whereas the Governor's proclamation has excited the citizens of the county, and I have this moment received information that armed bodies of colored men have organized and are now marching on the city," I command such "unlawful assemblages and armed bodies of men to disperse."

Spite of his Honor's denial, Governor Ames ascribed the trouble to violence and intimidation against blacks by whites, constituting a reign of terror, and convened the Legislature in extra session. This body called upon President Grant to awaken what Sumner called "the sleeping giant of the Constitution," and protect the State against domestic violence. Grant was reluctant to interpose. In his annual message hardly a fortnight before, he had said: "The whole subject of executive interference with the affairs of a State is repugnant to public opinion." "Unless most clearly on the side of law such interference becomes a crime." He therefore merely issued a proclamation commanding all disorderly bands in Mississippi to disperse. But breaches of the peace continued. At a public meeting in Yazoo City, September 1st, one man was killed and three or four wounded. The speaker of the evening, a Republican office-holder, left the county, professing to believe his life in danger. In Clinton, three days later, at a Republican barbecue, where there was a discussion between a Republican and a Democrat, a personal

Richard O'Leary, Mayor of Vicksburg in 1874.

quarrel sprang up, during which two negroes were shot. This was the signal for a general attack by blacks upon whites, in the course of which three white men were killed and several wounded. Later in the night seven or eight negroes were killed, when the armed men dispersed and quiet was restored. Another outbreak at Friar's Point, a month afterward, was clearly incited by a colored sheriff, who had called together a body of armed negroes to support him in the County Convention.

Ames now renewed his petition for United States troops, but met with a chilling response from the new Attorney-General, Edwards Pierrepont, a Democrat till Seymour's nomination, thereafter a Conservative Republican. He declared that the general government could aid Mississippi only when all the resources of the State Executive had been exhausted. He accompanied this utterance with words from Grant's despatches: "The whole public are tired out with these annual autumnal outbreaks in the South, and the great majority now are ready to condemn any interference on the part of the Government." Failing to secure assistance from Washington, Ames's party finally made an amicable arrangement with the Conservatives, which assured a fair and peaceable election.

This resulted in Republican defeat, whereupon Mr. Revels, the colored Senator from Mississippi, wrote to the President the following: "Since reconstruction the masses of people have been, as it were, enslaved in mind by unprincipled adventurers. A great portion of them have learned that they were being used as mere tools, and determined, by casting their ballots against these unprincipled adventurers, to overthrow them. The bitterness and hate created by the late civil strife have, in my opinion, been obliterated in this State, except, perhaps, in some localities, and would have long since been entirely effaced were it not for some unprincipled men who would keep alive the bitterness of the past and inculcate a hatred between the races in order that they may aggrandize themselves by office and its emoluments to control my people, the effect of which is to degrade them. If the State administration had advanced patriotic measures, appointed only honest and competent men to office, and sought to restore confidence between the races, bloodshed would have been unknown, peace would have prevailed, Federal interference been unthought of, and harmony, friendship, and mutual confidence would have taken the place of the bayonet." Testimony to the same effect was given by other prominent Republicans, white and black.

OVERTHROW OF THE KELLOGG GOVERNMENT

In Louisiana, because of the peculiarity of its social structure, the color-line was drawn even more sharply than in South Carolina. In South Carolina there were three distinct castes of whites—the aristocracy, the *bourgeoisie*, and the poor whites, or "sand-hillers," while the Louisiana white people were a perfect democracy, the only caste division in the State being founded on color. The best families used no coats-of-arms; their coachmen and servants wore no livery. The splendors usually attending vulgar wealth were entirely eschewed. "There was a nobility in the white skin more sacred and more respected than the one derived from the letters-patent of kings." Such solidarity among the whites rendered the feud precipitated by the negro's enfranchisement peculiarly bitter. White and black children no longer played together as of yore. To avoid seeming inferiority colored servants refused to sleep under the same roofs with their old masters.

It will be remembered that in November, 1872, Kellogg and McEnery each claimed to be elected Governor of Louisiana, that President Grant recognized Kellogg, but that McEnery and his supporters energetically protested. This contest had never been quieted. McEnery's government retained its organization though deprived of all power. Near the close of August, 1874, the troubles grew menacing. The two parties had met in convention, when the country was startled by the news of the arrest and deliberate shooting of six Republican officials. As in all such cases the reports

The Mississippi Legislature Passing a Resolution Asking for Federal Aid After the Attack on Vicksburg.
Scene in the Senate Chamber.

were conflicting, one side declaring it a merciless war of whites upon blacks, the other an uprising of the blacks themselves.

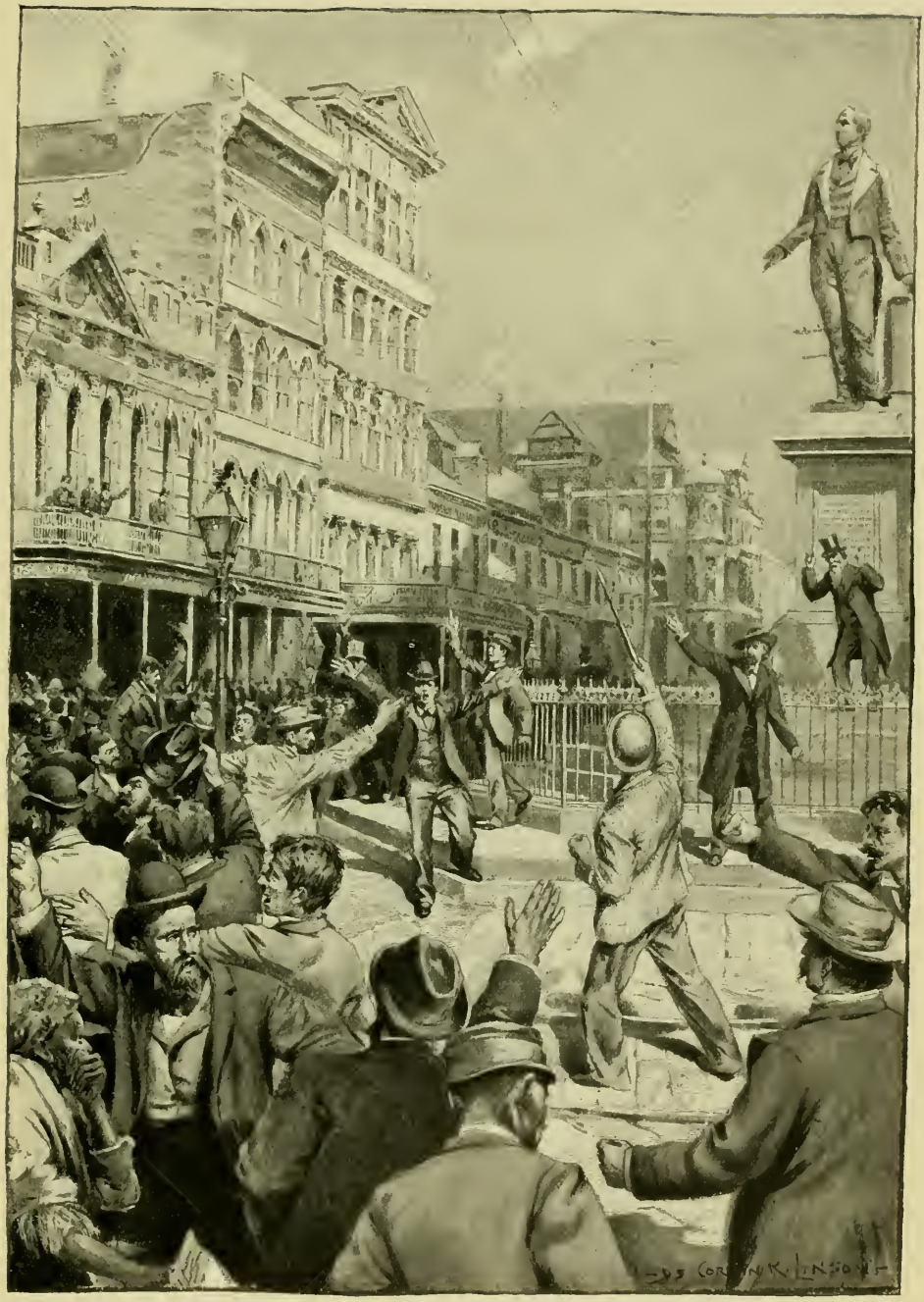
The wealth of Louisiana made the State a special temptation to carpet-baggers. Between 1866 and 1871 taxes had risen four hundred and fifty per cent. Before the war a session of the Legislature cost from $100,000 to $200,000; in 1871 the regular session cost $900,000. Judge Black considered it "safe to say that a general conflagration, sweeping over all the State from one end to the other and destroying every building and every article of personal property, would have been a visitation of mercy in comparison to the

curse of such a government." This statement is not extravagant if his other assertion is correct, that, during the ten years preceding 1876 New Orleans paid, in the form of direct taxes, more than the estimated value of all the property within her limits in the year named, and still had a debt of equal amount unpaid.

Kellogg had a body of Metropolitan Police, mostly colored, paid for by the city of New Orleans, but under his personal command, which formed a part of his militia. Over against this was the New Orleans White League, which again is to be distinguished from the White League of the State. On September 14th, a mass-meeting was called in New Orleans to protest against the governor's seizure of arms shipped to private parties. By 11 A.M. the broad sidewalks were filled for several squares, and there was a general suspension of business. A committee was appointed to wait upon the Governor and request him to abdicate. He had fled from the Executive Office to the Custom-house, a great citadel, garrisoned at that time by United States troops. From his retreat he sent word declining to entertain any communication. Their leaders advised the people to get arms and return to assist the White League in executing plans that would be arranged. A large number formed in procession and marched up Poydras Street. By 3 P.M. armed men were posted at street-crossings south of Canal Street. Soon a strong position was taken in Poydras Street, the streets between Poydras and Canal being barricaded with cars turned sideways. General Ogden commanded the citizens and superintended these arrangements. Five hundred Metropolitans, with cavalry and artillery, took their station at the head of Canal Street, while General Longstreet, their leader, rode up and down Canal Street calling upon the armed citizens to disperse. About 4 P.M. the Metropolitans assaulted the citizens' position. A sharp fight ensued. General Ogden's horse was shot under him, as was General Badger's on the Kellogg side. The colored Metropolitans broke at the first fire, deserting their white comrades. The citizens' victory was soon complete, General Longstreet and others seeking refuge in the Custom-house. Next morning, at seven, the State-house was in the citizens' hands; two hours later the whole Metropolitan force surrendered. The barricades were torn down and street-cars resumed their trips.

Lieutenant-Governor Penn hastened to assure the blacks that no harm was meant toward them, their property or their rights. "We war," said he, "only against the thieves, plunderers, and spoilers of the State." All the morning Penn's residence was filled with congratulatory crowds. In North Louisiana the *coup-d'état* roused delirious enthusiasm. At the same time leading citizens counselled moderation, especially urging that no violence toward colored people should be permitted. The Mayor's proclamation ran: "Let me advise extreme moderation; resume your vocations as soon as dismissed. Seek no revenge for past injuries, but leave your fallen enemies to the torture of their own consciences and to the lasting infamy which their acts have wrought for them." No acts of violence were reported, though McEnery's officials were installed all over the State. About 2 P.M., as three thousand of General Ogden's militia marched past the Custom-house, the United States troops gathered in the windows, took off their hats and gave the citizens three hearty cheers, which were returned. At 3 P.M ten thousand unarmed citizens, preceded by a band of music, escorted Penn to the State-house.

The triumph was short-lived. The resort to arms displeased President Grant. He commanded the insurgents to disperse in five days—half the time he had allowed in Arkansas and one-fourth the time he had allowed in his Louisiana proclamation of 1873. Troops and men-of-war were ordered to New Orleans, and General Emory instructed under no circumstances to recognize the Penn government. A cabinet meeting on September 17th concluded that "it was important to adopt measures for maintaining, if not the *de jure*, at least the *de facto* government in Louisiana." Attorney-General Williams compared the case with that of Arkansas, where, he confessed, he always believed Brooks had a majority, but said: "The



The Mass-meeting of September 14, 1874, at the Clay Statue, New Orleans.

L. A. Wiltz Taking Possession of the Speaker's Chair in the Louisiana State-house, January 4, 1875.

question is not who ought to be Governor, but who is." On the 18th Emory received positive directions to recognize the Kellogg government, and on the next day Kellogg was induced to venture from his asylum and resume his office. Not all the McEnery officials were turned out, as several of the Kellogg placemen had fled upon the news of Penn's success and could not be found. The new city police, under Mr. Boylan, a well-known detective, were retained, owing to the demoralization of the Metropolitans. For a time United States soldiers were employed on police duty. On an election-day as much as six weeks later, to remove apprehension caused by the inefficiency of the Metropolitans, a detail of the McEnery militia was made to preserve the peace at each polling-place.

McEnery and Penn advised cheerful

submission, and while surrendering the State-house to Colonel Brooks showed him every courtesy. The only excess reported was an unsuccessful attack by negroes upon Bayou Sara on September 19th. In answer to Attorney-General Williams's pronunciamento, Penn asserted that the McEnery government had been organized ever since 1872; that McEnery's armed supporters were not insurgents but militia; that the sole reason why the McEnery government was not *de facto* in function all over the State was that it was overpowered by the United States forces, but for which it could assert its authority and would be universally obeyed. The Kellogg government, he said, could be placed and kept in power by the United States army, but in no other way whatever. "Is this," he asked, "the Republican form of government guaranteed to every State under the Constitution?"

John McEnery.

Happily the army had no command to repress free speech, which was usefully employed in appeals to the country. These papers were of unusual clearness and force. Besides describing anew the corruptions already alluded to, they accused the Kellogg faction of altering the registration laws in its own interest. "Many white citizens clearly entitled to registry were refused arbitrarily, while the colored people were furnished registration papers on which, in many instances, they could vote in different wards; and colored crews of steamboats transiently visiting this port were permitted to swell the number of voters." The "White League," which, outside New Orleans, seems not to have been an armed body, was declared a necessary measure of defence against a formidable oath-bound order of blacks.

General de Trobriand.

Governor Kellogg sought to explain the uprising. He said: "They first want the offices, and that is the meaning of this outburst. The Governor of Louisiana wields an enormous amount of patronage, for which McEnery and his friends hunger." However, at his instance, an Advisory Board, consisting of two men from each party and an umpire chosen by them, was arranged to supervise and carry on the registration for the next election. Though, perhaps, honestly conceived, this plan amounted to little. About the middle of October the umpire resigned, and the function of the Board virtually came to an end. Further, the Conservatives were to cause all violence to cease, and were permitted to fill two vacancies on the Returning Board created by resignation for this purpose.

The election of November 2, 1874, was quiet. Indications seemed to point to Democratic success. A break in the colored vote was foreshadowed, among other things, by an address of leading colored men in New Orleans, setting forth that the Republican party in the State had, since reconstruction, been managed and controlled by men in all respects as bad as "the most rampant White Leaguer," that they had shut out the colored wealth and intelligence and put in office "illiterate and unworthy colored men." The colored people, it said, "are ready to adopt any honorable adjustment tending to harmonize the races," to further law and order and a higher standard of administration in public offices.

Of course the Returning Board played an important part in this election. One example will illustrate its methods. The parish of Rapides chose three legislators. The United States Supervisor certified that the election was in all respects full, fair, and free. In the parish itself no one knew that any contest existed. At one of its last

sittings the Board, upon an affidavit of its President, Wells, alleging intimidation, counted in all three Republicans. This, like other acts of the kind, was done in secret or "executive" session. The Council of the Democratic Committee declared that they had no chance to answer. It came out that Wells was not present at Rapides, and he declined, though given the opportunity, to explain to the Congressional Committee his action. The Rapides change alone sufficed to determine the complexion of the lower house.

General Philip H. Sheridan.
From a photograph in the historical collection of H. W. Fay.

After recounting instances of illegal action and fraud on the part of the Returning Board, the Inspecting Committee appealed to the nation: "We, the down-trodden people of once free Louisiana, now call upon the people of the free States of America, if you would yourselves remain free and retain the right of self-government, to demand in tones that cannot be misunderstood or disregarded, that the shackles be stricken from Louisiana, and that the power of the United States army may no longer be used to keep a horde of adventurers in power."

On December 24, 1874, the Returning Board completed its labors. It gave the treasury to the Republicans, and allowed them a majority of two in the Legislature, five seats being left open. These changes from the face of the returns were made on the ground of alleged fraud, intimidation, or other irregularity at the polls, or in making the returns. The Board dismissed as preposterous all complaints of intimidation by United States soldiery, though at least one case is reported of a Federal officer making out affidavits against citizens, and arresting them upon these affidavits. He was stopped later by orders from his superior.

The Congressional Investigating Committee, composed of two Republicans and one Democrat, hence wholly likely to be impartial, after citing three or four instances of fraud on the part of the Returning Board, unanimously found itself "constrained to declare that the action of the Returning Board on the whole, was arbitrary, unjust, and illegal; and that this arbitrary, unjust, and illegal action alone prevented the return of a majority of the Conservative members to the lower house."

A few days before the assembling of the Legislature one of the Republican members was arrested and confined till

S. S. Marshall.

William P. Fry.

William A. Wheeler.

G. F. Hoar.

The Committee which Formulated the "Wheeler Adjustment."

after the opening. The Conservatives alleged that this was for embezzlement; the Republicans charged that it was for political purposes, and that their opponents were attempting to kidnap and even threatening to assassinate Republican legislators to wipe out the majority. So threatening an aspect of affairs induced Grant to give Sheridan command of the Military Department of the Gulf in addition to his own. Sheridan started on telegraphic notice.

The Legislature convened on January 4th. Suppressed excitement could be seen in every eye. Of the memorable and unprecedented events of this day there are four varying accounts—General Sheridan's statement, two reports to Congress by committees of the two political parties in the Louisiana House of Representatives, and a recital incorporated in the Congressional Committee's report above referred to. The last, of which we give a *résumé*, is the most trustworthy.

The State-House was filled and surrounded by Metropolitans and Federal soldiers, and no one permitted to enter save by Governor Kellogg's orders. At noon the clerk of the preceding House, Mr. Vigers, called the Assembly to order and proceeded to call the roll. Fifty Democrats and fifty-two Republicans answered to their names. Instantly a Conservative member, Mr. Billieu, nominated L. A. Wiltz as temporary chairman. The clerk interposed some objection, but Mr. Billieu, disregarding him, hurriedly put the motion and declared it carried upon a *viva voce* vote. Wiltz sprang to the platform, pushed the clerk aside, and seized the gavel. Justice Houston then swore in the members *en bloc*. In the same hurried fashion a new clerk was elected, also a sergeant-at-arms; then, from among gentlemen who had secured entrance under one pretext or another, a number of assistant sergeants-at-arms were appointed. These gentlemen at once opened their coats and discovered each his badge bearing the words "Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms." Protests, points of order, calls for the yeas and nays, were overridden. The five contesting Democrats were admitted and sworn in. The Republicans now adopted their opponents' tactics, someone nominating Mr. Lowell for temporary chairman, and amid great confusion declared him elected, but he declined to serve. The organization of the House was completed by the election of Wiltz as Speaker. Several Republican members attempting to leave were prevented by the assistant Sergeants-at-arms. Pistols were displayed, and the disorder grew so great that the House requested Colonel de Trobriand, commanding the forces at the State-house, to insist upon order in the lobby. This he did, and the House proceeded with the election of minor officers, uninterrupted for an hour. At length de Trobriand received word from Governor Kellogg, which his general orders bound him to obey, to remove the five members sworn in who had not been returned by the Board. Speaker Wiltz refusing to point them out, General Campbell did so, and in spite of protest they were removed by Federal soldiers. Wiltz then left the hall at the head of the Conservative members. The Republicans, remaining, organized to suit themselves.

GENERAL SHERIDAN'S ATTITUDE

General Sheridan reported the matter somewhat differently. He reached Louisiana in no judicial frame of mind. Conservative chagrin and humiliation often took form in foolish threats, which were at once seized upon by the carpet-baggers and scalawags to fan his wrath. The very air seemed to him impregnated with assassination. He suggested that Congress or the President should declare the "ringleaders of the armed White Leagues" banditti; he could then try them by military commission and put an end to such scenes as had occurred. The New Orleans Cotton Exchange, a meeting of Northern and Western residents of New Orleans, and other bodies passed resolutions denying the correctness of Sheridan's impressions. In an appeal to the American people a number of New Orleans clergymen condemned the charges lodged by Sheridan with the Secretary of War as "unmerited, unfounded, and erroneous." General Sheridan reiterated them, and ac-

cused Bishop Wilmer, one of the signers of the appeal, of having admitted before the Congressional Committee "that the condition of affairs was substantially as bad as reported." The Bishop admitted that Louisianians were more prone than others to acts of violence, saying "there is a feeling of insecurity here," an expression which he interpreted as meaning "no security in the courts against theft."

General Sherman commented on the case as follows: "I have all along tried to save our officers and soldiers from the dirty work imposed on them by the city authorities of the South; and may thereby have incurred the suspicion of the President that I did not cordially sustain his forces. . . . I have always thought it wrong to bolster up weak State governments by our troops. We should keep the peace always; but not act as bailiff constables and catch thieves; that should be beneath a soldier's vocation. I know that our soldiers hate that kind of duty terribly, and not one of those officers but would prefer to go to the plains against the Indians, rather than encounter a street mob or serve a civil process. But in our government it is too hard to stand up in the face of what is apparent, that the present government of Louisiana is not the choice of the people, though in strict technical law it is the State government."

William Pitt Kellogg.

PROTEST AGAINST FEDERAL INTERFERENCE

Public opinion at the North sided with the appellants. The press gave a cry of alarm at such military interference in civil affairs. A stanch Republican sheet uttered the sentiment of many when it said, "Unless the Republican party is content to be swept out of existence by the storm of indignant protest arising against the wrongs of Louisiana from all portions of the country, it will see that this most shameful outrage is redressed wholly and at once." Numerous indignation meetings were held in Northern cities. Republicans like William Cullen Bryant, William M. Evarts, Joseph R. Hawley, and Carl Schurz, openly condemned the use which had been made of the troops. Legislatures passed resolutions denouncing it, and it was understood that Fish, Bristow, and Jewell, of the Cabinet, disapproved. Yet patience was urged upon the people of Louisiana. "Whatever injustice," said Carl Schurz, "you may have to suffer, let not a hand of yours be lifted, let no provocation of insolent power, nor any tempting opportunity seduce you into the least demonstration of violence. As your cause is just, trust to its justice, for surely the time cannot be far when every American who truly loves his liberty will recognize the cause of his own rights and liberties in the cause of constitutional government in Louisiana."

Under a resolution introduced by Mr. Thurman, the Senate called upon President Grant for explanation. A special message was the response, defending the end which had been had in view but really leaving undefended the means employed. Early in 1875 a second committee, George F. Hoar chairman, was appointed to investigate Louisiana affairs. The result of their labors is known as the "Wheeler Adjustment," which embraced on the one hand submission to the Kellogg government, and on the other arbitration by the Committee of Contested Seats in the Legislature. This arbitration seated twelve of the contestants excluded by the Returning Board. Mr. Hahn vacated the Speaker's chair, Mr. Wiltz withdrew as a candidate therefor, and Mr. Estilette, a Conservative, was elected. This settlement marked the beginning of the end of carpet-baggery in Louisiana.

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